This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

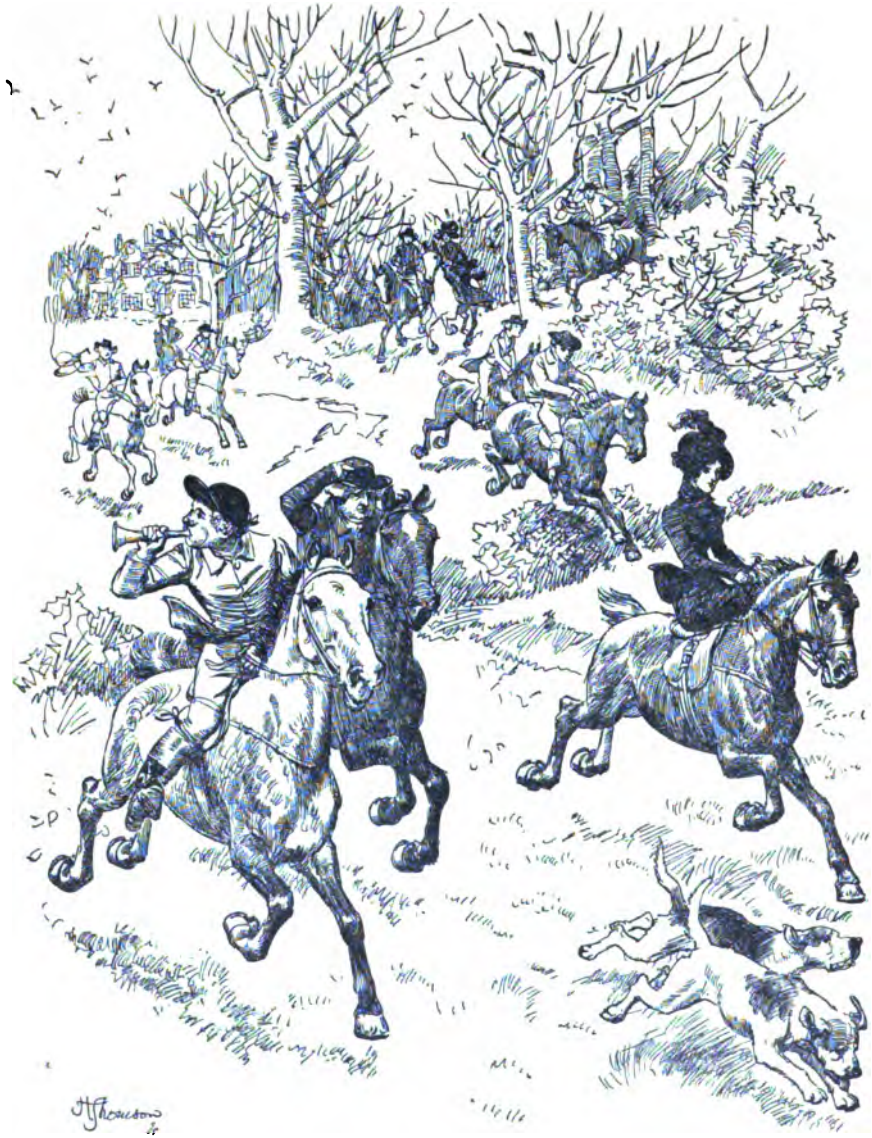
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

Linder - 42 -

FRED M. YOUNG
COLLECTION

STEENBOCK MEMORIAL LIBRARY

THE CHASE



THE CHASE

BY

WILLIAM SOMERVILE

REPRINTED FROM THE ORIGINAL
EDITION OF 1735, WITH A MEMOIR
OF THE AUTHOR

ILLUSTRATIONS BY HUGH THOMSON

LONDON
GEORGE REDWAY
MDCCCXCVI

Steele, Sir R.
PR
3699
S2
C48
1830

AC X 8 124

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Memoir of the Author	vii
Somervile's Preface to "The Chase"	xv
"The Chase"	1

MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR

William Somervile, a descendant of a family which boasted its Norman lineage and made the customary claim to have entered England with the Conqueror, was born at Edstone, in the parish of Wootton Warren, Warwickshire, in 1677. *The Edstone estate, originally granted by the Conqueror to the De Staffords, passed into the possession of the Somerviles in the time of Edward IV., at the marriage of a certain Thomas Somervile with Joanna, heiress of the Ailesbury line. The poet's great grandfather is reported to have been intimate with Shakespeare after the latter's retirement from the stage, and possessed a portrait of him—supposed to be by the hand of Nicholas Hilliard—which was preserved in the Somervile family.*

An early error as to the date of William Somervile's birth (placing it in 1692) *was industriously repeated by various biographers; but the registers of Winchester College and of New College, Oxford, where Somervile was educated, place it beyond doubt that* 1677 *is the correct date. One of the oldest of the "long rolls" of Winchester College gives the year* 1690 *as the date of his election as scholar at the age of thirteen, his name appearing in the "fourth class" of the scholars of that year.*

As one of the fortunate whose name was on the roll for transference to New College, he took up his fellowship there in 1694 *and retained it until* 1704. *During his vacations he indulged his natural propensity for field sports, at which he became an adept. From the time of his leaving Oxford until his death he lived with his sister at Edstone, finding his chief amusement in the chase. It has been supposed, from the elaboration and enthusiasm with which the subject is treated in* The Chase, *that hare-hunting was his favourite branch of sport. A writer in the* Sporting Magazine (*for Feb.* 1832) *gives some reminiscences of Somervile obtained from a Warwickshire worthy whose sporting education was undertaken by Somervile's old huntsman. The paper is accompanied by a drawing of Edstone House, which appears as a roomy, two-storied structure, with attics in a thatched roof, a garden close up to the house, and a mill stream running down one side of it. "The site of his kennel," says the writer, "was well chosen 'on a little eminence erect,' facing the south-east, with a grove of willow, poplar, and elm at the back to shield it from the north and west winds. The kennel was spacious, with a fine brook babbling through. He kept about twelve couple of beagles, bred chiefly between the small Cotswold harrier and the Southern hound; six couple of fox-hounds, rather rough, and wire-haired; and five couple of otter-hounds, which in the winter season made an addition to the fox-hounds. The country he hunted was chiefly woodland, except that where his beagles were generally thrown off; and every parish, being uninclosed, yielded excellent sport. To the feeding of his hounds, and the management and arrangement of his kennel, he attended himself. . . .*

He conducted the chase himself; leaving a man in the kennel to prepare the food, who was in the capacity of earth-stopper. His stud was small, four nags being the greatest number he ever had in the stable; employing his favourite, Old Ball, three times in the week. Old Ball was a real good English hunter, standing about fifteen hands high, with black legs, short back, high in the shoulders, large barrel, thin head, cropped ears, and a white blaze down the face."

The only trace remaining of old Edstone House is a small stone, bearing the Somervile arms, built into a doorway of the building that now stands upon its site.

The author of The Chase *gave no early promise of poetic ability; indeed he seems at first to have rather dabbled in verse than to have given any striking indication of the talent that was in him. One of his earliest efforts was an ode "humbly inscribed to the Duke of Marlborough, upon his Removal from all his Places," written in* 1711. *This was followed by an ode "occasioned by the Duke of Marlborough's embarking for Ostend, An.* 1712." *According to the fashion of his time, his hero-worship took the form of verses "humbly inscribed" to a variety of persons, such as General (afterwards Earl) Stanhope, the Earl of Halifax, Addison, Pope, and the author of* The Seasons. *In* 1727 *he brought out a volume of* Occasional Poems; *but cannot be said to have made any serious bid for fame until the publication, in* 1735, *of* The Chase. *Its success was immediate. A second and third edition appeared in the same year as the first; a fourth and a fifth in* 1757; *a sixth in* 1773, *and another (with Bewick's illustrations) in* 1796; *and during the first half of the*

present century the poem was frequently reprinted. It was followed in 1742 *by* Field Sports, *and in* 1760 *by* Hobbinol, *a burlesque poem dedicated to Hogarth. The first collected edition of his works did not appear till* 1766. *The earliest illustrator of* The Chase *was Bewick, followed in* 1800 *by Stothard, in* 1874 *by Sartorius, and now by the graceful and vivid fancy of Mr. Thomson.*

*During the last years of his life Somervile was much harassed by pecuniary difficulties, which in great part resulted from his love of dispensing hospitality on a scale entirely incommensurate with his means. This led him to make a monetary arrangement with his kinsman James, Lord Somervile, by which the latter, "in consideration of certain sums applied to the relief of burdens," should enjoy the reversion, at the poet's death, of the Edstone estate, and also of his property at Somervile-Aston in Gloucestershire, subject to a charge of £*600 *per annum as jointure for Somervile's mother, who lived to the age of ninety.*

Eventually he fell a victim to the inducement to obscure the consciousness of his troubles by heavy drinking; "forced," as his neighbour and intimate friend, the poet William Shenstone, wrote of him, "to drink himself into pains of the body to kill pains of the mind." His favourite beverage was a toddy composed of rum, black-currant jelly, and a very little water—a mixture stated to be "excellent and healing after a hard day's exercise when taken moderately, but in Somervile's case an insinuating poison." He died on 19 *July,* 1742, *and was buried at Wootton. His wife Mary, daughter of Hugh Bethel of Yorkshire, had predeceased him, leaving no issue.*

The writer in the Sporting Magazine *asserts that Somervile was able to follow the hounds almost to the day of his death; and states that in the last year of his life he was entertained at dinner by two hundred fellow sportsmen, in honour of his prowess in the field. "At this meeting," says an informant, "he offered to bet fifty pounds that he would kill his hares, and pick them up too, before any of the young bloods present could accomplish it (provided they would let him hunt the hounds), which was of course assented to; and the veteran, to the discomfiture of many, won the fifty." If these reminiscences be founded upon fact, we must attribute to literary affectation the sentiments with which Somervile opens his Preface to* The Chase. *Though as a poet he stood high in the estimation of his contemporaries, he stood perhaps higher as a sportsman; as a man he was ungrudgingly beloved for his kindness of heart. A letter of Shenstone's, written immediately upon Somervile's death, begins: "Our old friend Somervile is dead! I did not imagine I could have been so sorry as I find myself on the occasion. 'Sublatum querimus.' I can now excuse all his foibles: impute them to age and to distress of circumstances."*

The only known portrait of Somervile is a steel engraving made by W. H. Worthington from a drawing by J. Thurston, probably about 1820. *A copy of this is preserved in the British Museum; another is inserted in the Birmingham Reference Library's copy of the* 1735 *edition of* The Chase. *There it is stated to be "from an original picture in the collection of C. Wren, Esq.," and is accompanied by a pencil sketch of Somervile, of the authenticity of which nothing is known. Both represent his face as somewhat long and decidedly oval*

in shape; eyes rather deep set; nose long and straight, and mouth well formed, but suggestive of sensitiveness and indecision. Lady Luxborough (Lord Bolingbroke's sister) comments, in a letter to Shenstone, on the fact that a portrait of Somervile which has been submitted to her does not do justice to the fairness of his complexion. This may have been the original from which Thurston's drawing was made. From the same source we learn that Somervile made a translation of Voltaire's "Alzira," the MS. being in Lady Luxborough's possession.

Somervile's poetical gifts gained him a pleasant and honourable reputation, not unworthy the reviving. Even so severe a critic of verse as Dr. Johnson could not refuse a considerable meed of praise to The Chase, *a work undertaken, as he says, "in its author's maturer age, when his ear was improved to the approbation of blank verse. He is allowed by sportsmen," Johnson continues, "to write with great intelligence of his subject, which is the first requisite to excellence; and though it is impossible to interest the common readers of verse in the dangers or pleasures of the chase, he has done all that transition and variety could effect; and has, with great propriety, enlarged his plan by the modes of hunting used in other countries."*

A critic more in sympathy with Somervile's subject—a lover of horse and hound—has recently written of the poem: "Of all books on hunting, this alone seems to describe 'sport' in its true meaning, and is a great deal more correct in details than any modern books I ever read."

R. FARQUHARSON SHARP.

September 1896

THE

CHACE.

A

POEM.

BY

WILLIAM SOMERVILE, Esq.

Nec tibi cura Canum fuerit poſtrema.
VIRG. GEORG. III.

Romanis ſolenne viris opus, utile famæ,
Vitæque, & membris.
HOR. Ep. XVIII. Lib. I.

LONDON,

Printed for G. HAWKINS, and sold by T. COOPER at the *Globe* in *Pater-Noster-Row*.

MDCCXXXV.

PREFACE

THE old and infirm have at least this privilege, that they can recall to their minds those scenes of joy in which they once delighted, and ruminate over their past pleasures, with a satisfaction almost equal to the first enjoyment. For those ideas, to which any agreeable sensation is annexed, are easily excited; as leaving behind them the most strong and permanent impressions. The amusements of our youth are the boast and comfort of our declining years. The ancients carried this notion even yet further, and supposed their heroes in the Elysian Fields were fond of the very same diversions they exercised on earth. Death itself could not wean them from the accustomed sports and gaieties of life.

Pars in gramineis exercent membra palæstris,
Contendunt ludo, & fulvâ luctantur arenâ:
Pars pedibus plaudunt choreas, & carmina dicunt.
Arma procul currusque virûm miratur inanes.
Stant terrâ defixæ hastæ, passimque soluti
Per campos pascuntur equi. Quæ gratia currûm
Armorumque fuit vivis, quæ cura nitentes
Pascere equos, eadem sequitur tellure repôstos.

VIRG. Æneid. VI.

> Part on the grassy cirque their pliant limbs
> In wrestling exercise, or on the sands
> Struggling dispute the prize. Part lead the ring,
> Or swell the chorus with alternate lays.
> The chief their arms admires, their empty cars,
> Their lances fix'd in earth. Th' unharness'd steeds
> Graze unrestrain'd; horses, and cars, and arms,
> All the same fond desires, and pleasing cares,
> Still haunt their shades, and after death survive.

I hope, therefore, I may be indulged (even by the more grave and censorious part of mankind) if, at my leisure hours, I run over, in my elbow-chair, some of those chaces, which were once the delight of a more vigorous age. It is an entertaining, and (as I conceive) a very innocent amusement. The result of these rambling imaginations will be found in the following poem; which if equally diverting to my readers, as to myself, I shall have gained my end. I have intermixed the preceptive parts with so many descriptions and digressions in the Georgick manner, that I hope they will not be tedious. I am sure they are very necessary to be well understood by any gentleman, who would enjoy this noble sport in full perfection. In this at least I may comfort myself, that I cannot trespass upon their patience more than Markham, Blome, and the other prose writers upon this subject.

It is most certain, that Hunting was the exercise of the greatest heroes in antiquity. By this they formed themselves for war; and their exploits against wild beasts were a prelude to their future victories. Xenophon says, that almost all the ancient heroes, Nestor,

Theseus, Castor, Pollux, Ulysses, Diomedes, Achilles, &c., were Μαθεταὶ Κυνηγεσιῶν, disciples of hunting; being taught carefully that art, as what would be highly serviceable to them in military discipline. (Xen. Cynegetic). And Pliny observes, those who were designed for great captains, were first taught *certare cum fugacibus feris cursu, cum audacibus robore, cum callidis astu:* to contest with the swiftest wild beasts, in speed; with the boldest, in strength; with the most cunning, in craft and subtility. (Plin. Panegyr). And the Roman Emperors, in those monuments they erected to transmit their actions to future ages, made no scruple to join the glories of the chace to their most celebrated triumphs. Neither were their poets wanting to do justice to this heroic exercise. Beside that of Oppian in Greek, we have several poems in Latin upon Hunting. Gratius was contemporary with Ovid; as appears by this verse,

> Aptaque venanti Gratius arma dabit.
>
> LIB. IV. PONT.

Gratius shall arm the huntsman for the chace.

But of his works only some fragments remain. There are many others of more modern date: amongst these, Nemesianus, who seems very much superior to Gratius, though of a more degenerate age. But only a fragment of his first book is preserved. We might indeed have expected to have seen it treated more at large by Virgil in his third Georgick, since it is expressly part of his subject. But he has favoured us only with ten verses; and what he says of dogs, relates wholly to greyhounds and mastiffs.

Veloces Spartæ catulos, acremque molossum. .

GEORG. III.

The greyhound swift, and mastiff's furious breed.

And he directs us to feed them with butter-milk. *Pasce sero pingui.* He has, it is true, touched upon the chace in the 4th and 7th books of the Æneid. But it is evident, that the art of hunting is very different now from what it was in his days, and very much altered and improved in these latter ages. It does not appear to me that the ancients had any notion of pursuing wild beasts by the scent only, with a regular and well-disciplined pack of hounds; and therefore they must have passed for poachers amongst our modern sportsmen. The muster roll given us by Ovid, in his story of Actæon, is of all sorts of dogs, and of all countries. And the description of the ancient hunting, as we find it in the Antiquities of Pere de Montfaucon, taken from the Sepulchre of the Nasos, and the arch of Constantine, has not the least trace of the manner now in use.

Whenever the ancients mention dogs following by the scent, they mean no more than finding out the game by the nose of one single dog. This was as much as they knew of the odora canum vis. Thus Nemesianus says,

Odorato noscunt vestigia prato,
Atque etiam leporum secreta cubilia monstrant.

They challenge on the mead the recent stains,
And trail the hare unto her secret form.

Oppian has a long description of these dogs in his first book from

ver. 479 to 526. And here, though he seems to describe the hunting of the hare by the scent through many turnings and windings, yet he really says no more, than that one of those hounds, which he calls ἰκνευτῆρες, finds out the game. For he follows the scent no further than the hare's form; from whence, after he has started her, he pursues her by sight. I am indebted for these two last remarks to a reverend and very learned gentleman, whose judgment in the Belles Lettres nobody disputes, and whose approbation gave me the assurance to publish this poem.

Oppian also observes, that the best sort of these finders were brought from Britain; this island having always been famous (as it is at this day) for the best breed of hounds, for persons the best skilled in the art of hunting, and for horses the most enduring to follow the chace. It is therefore strange that none of our poets have yet thought it worth their while to treat of this subject; which is without doubt very noble in itself, and very well adapted to receive the most beautiful turns of poetry. Perhaps our poets have no great genius for hunting. Yet I hope, my brethren of the couples, by encouraging this first, but imperfect essay, will shew the world they have at least some taste for poetry.

The ancients esteemed hunting, not only as a manly and warlike exercise, but as highly conducive to health. The famous Galen recommends it above all others, as not only exercising the body, but giving delight and entertainment to the mind. And he calls the inventors of this art wise men, and well skilled in human nature. (Lib. de parvæ Pilæ Exercitio.)

The gentlemen, who are fond of a gingle at the close of every verse, and think no poem truly musical but what it is in rhime will here find themselves disappointed. If they will be pleased to read over the short preface before the Paradise Lost, Mr. Smith's Poem in memory of his friend Mr. John Philips, and the Archbishop of Cambray's Letter to Monsieur Fontenelle, they may probably be of another opinion. For my own part, I shall not be ashamed to follow the example of Milton, Philips, Thomson, and all our best tragick writers.

Some few terms of art are dispersed here and there; but such only as are absolutely requisite to explain my subject. I hope in this the criticks will excuse me; for I am humbly of opinion, that the affectation, and not the necessary use, is the proper object of their censure.

But I have done. I know the impatience of my brethren, when a fine day, and the concert of the kennel, invite them abroad. I shall therefore leave my reader to such diversion as he may find in the poem itself.

En age, Segnes,
Rumpe moras, vocat ingenti clamore Cithæron,
Taygetique canes, domitrixque Epidaurus equorum;
Et vox assensu nemorum ingeminata remugit.
VIRG. GEORG. III.

Hark away,
Cast far behind the ling'ring cares of life.
Cithæron calls aloud, and in full cry
Thy hounds, Taygetus. Epidaurus trains
For us the gen'rous steed; the hunter's shouts,
And cheering cries, assenting woods return.

To

WILLIAM SOMERVILE, ESQ.

ON HIS POEM CALLED

THE CHASE

WHILE you (Sir) gain the steep Ascent to Fame,
And Honours due to deathless Merit claim ;
To a weak Muse a kind Indulgence lend,
Fond with just Praise your Labours to commend,
And tell the World that Somervile's her Friend.
Her Incense guiltless of the Forms of Art
Breathes all the Huntsman's Honesty of Heart ;
Whose Fancy still the pleasing Scene retains
Of Edric's Villa and Ardenna's Plains :
Joys, which from Change superior Charms receiv'd
The Horn hoarse-sounding by the Lyre reliev'd :
When the Day crown'd with rural, chaste Delight
Resigns obsequious to the festive Night ;
The festive Night awakes th' harmonious Lay,
And in sweet Verse recounts the triumphs of the Day,
Strange ! that the British Muse should leave so long,

The Chace, the Sport of Britain's Kings, unsung!
Distinguish'd Land! by Heav'n indulg'd to breed
The stout, sagacious Hound, and gen'rous Steed:
In vain! while yet no Bard adorned our Isle,
To celebrate the glorious Sylvan Toil.
For this what darling Son shall feel thy Fire,
God of th' unerring Bow and tuneful Lyre?
Our Vows are heard—attend, ye vocal Throng,
Somervile meditates th' advent'rous Song.
Bold to attempt, and happy to excell,
His num'rous Verse the Huntsman's Art shall tell,
From him, ye British Youths, a vig'rous Race,
Imbibe the various Science of the Chace;
And while the well-plan'd System you admire,
Know, Brunswick only could the Work inspire:
A Georgic Muse awaits Augustan days,
And Somerviles will sing, when Frederics give the Bays.

To the

AUTHOR OF THE CHASE

Once more (my Friend) I touch the trembling Lyre
And in my bosom feel poetick Fire.
For thee I quit the Law's more rugged Ways,
To pay my humble Tribute to thy Lays.
What, tho' I daily turn each learned Sage,
And labour thro' the unenlighten'd Page :
Wak'd by thy Lines, the borrow'd Flames I feel,
As flints give Fire when aided by the Steel.
Tho' in sulphureous Clouds of Smoak confin'd,
Thy rural Scenes spring fresh into my Mind,
Thy Genius in such Colours paints the Chace,
The real to fictitious Joys give place.
When the wild Musick charms my ravish'd Ear,
How dull, how tasteless Handel's Notes appear !
Ev'n Farenelli's Self the Palm resigns,
It yields—but to the Music of thy Lines.
If Friends to Poetry can yet be found
Who, without blushing Sense prefer to Sound ;
Then let this soft, this Soul-enfeebling Band,
These warbling Minstrels quit the beggar'd Land

They but a momentary Joy impart,
'Tis you, who touch the Soul, and warm the Heart.
How tempting do thy sylvan Sports appear !
Ev'n wild ambition might vouchsafe an Ear,
Might her fond Lust of Power awhile compose,
And gladly change it for thy sweet Repose.
No fierce, unruly Senates threaten here,
No Axe, no Scaffold to the View appear,
No Envy, Disappointment and Despair.
Here, blest Vicissitude ! whene'er you please,
You Step from Exercise, to learned Ease ;
Turn o'er each Classick Page, each Beauty trace,
The Mind unwearied in the pleasing Chace.
Oh ! would kind Heav'n such Happiness bestow,
Let Fools, let Knaves, be Masters here below.

J. TRACY

The Chase
A Poem
by
William Somervile, Esq.

Book the First.

ARGUMENT

The Subject proposed—Address to his Royal Highness the Prince—The Origin of Hunting—The rude and unpolished Manner of the first Hunters—Beasts at first hunted for Food and Sacrifice—The Grant made by God to Man of the Beasts, &c.—The regular Manner of Hunting first brought into this Island by the Normans—The best Hounds and best Horses bred here—The Advantage of this Exercise to us, as Islanders—Address to Gentlemen of Estates—Situation of the Kennel and its several Courts—The Diversion and Employment of Hounds in the Kennel—The different Sorts of Hounds for each different Chace—Description of a perfect Hound—Of sizing and sorting of Hounds, the middle-sized Hound recommended—Of the large deep-mouthed Hound for hunting the Stag and Otter—Of the Lime Hound; their Use on the Borders of England and Scotland—A Physical Account of Scents—Of good and bad Scenting Days—A short Admonition to my Brethren of the Couples.

HE chace I sing, hounds, and their various breed,
And no less various use. O thou great prince!
Whom Cambria's tow'ring hills proclaim their lord,
Deign thou to hear my bold, instructive song.
While grateful citizens, with pompous shew,
Rear the triumphal arch, rich with th' exploits

Of thy illustrious house; while virgins pave
Thy way with flow'rs, and, as the royal youth
Passing they view, admire, and sigh in vain;
While crowded theatres, too fondly proud
Of their exotic minstrels, and shrill pipes,
The price of manhood, hail thee with a song,
And airs soft-warbling; my hoarse-sounding horn
Invites thee to the chace, the sport of kings;
Image of war, without its guilt. The Muse
Aloft on wing shall soar, conduct with care
Thy foaming courser o'er the steepy rock,
Or on the river bank receive thee safe,
Light-bounding o'er the wave, from shore to shore.
Be thou our great protector, gracious youth!
And if, in future times, some envious prince,
Careless of right and guileful, should invade
Thy Britain's commerce, or should strive in vain
To wrest the balance from thy equal hand;
Thy hunter-train, in cheerful green array'd
(A band undaunted, and inur'd to toils),
Shall compass thee around, die at thy feet,
Or hew thy passage thro' th' embattled foe,
And clear thy way to fame; inspir'd by thee,
The nobler chace of glory shall pursue
Thro' fire, and smoke, and blood, and fields of death.

Nature, in her productions slow, aspires
By just degrees to reach perfection's height:
So mimic art works leisurely, till time
Improve the piece, or wise experience give
The proper finishing. When Nimrod bold,
That mighty hunter, first made war on beasts,
And stain'd the wood-land green with purple dye,
New, and unpolish'd was the huntsman's art;
No stated rule, his wanton will his guide.
With clubs and stones, rude implements of war,
He arm'd his savage bands, a multitude
Untrain'd; of twining osiers form'd, they pitch
Their artless toils, then range the desert hills,
And scour the plains below: the trembling herd
Start at th' unusual sound, and clam'rous shout
Unheard before; surprised, alas! to find
Man now their foe, whom erst they deem'd their lord,
But mild, and gentle, and by whom as yet
Secure they graz'd. Death stretches o'er the plain
Wide-wasting, and grim slaughter red with blood:
Urg'd on by hunger keen, they wound, they kill,
Their rage licentious knows no bound; at last
Encumber'd with their spoils, joyful they bear
Upon their shoulders broad the bleeding prey.
Part on their altars smokes a sacrifice

To that all-gracious Pow'r, whose bounteous hand
Supports his wide Creation ; what remains
On living coals they broil, inelegant
Of taste, nor skill'd as yet in nicer arts
Of pamper'd luxury. Devotion pure,
And strong necessity, thus first began
The chace of beasts : tho' bloody was the deed,
Yet without guilt. For, the green herb alone
Unequal to sustain man's lab'ring race,
* Now ev'ry moving thing that liv'd on earth
Was granted him for food. So just is Heav'n
To give us in proportion to our wants.
Or chance or industry in after-times
Some few improvements made, but short as yet
Of due perfection. In this isle remote
Our painted ancestors were slow to learn,
To arms devote, in the politer arts
Nor skill'd nor studious ; till from Neustria's coasts
Victorious William to more decent rules
Subdu'd our Saxon fathers, taught to speak
The proper dialect, with horn and voice
To cheer the busy hound, whose well-known cry
His list'ning peers approve with joint acclaim.
From him successive huntsmen learn'd to join

* Gen. chap. ix. ver. 3.

In bloody social leagues, the multitude
Dispers'd, to size, to sort their various tribes,
To rear, feed, hunt, and discipline the pack.
  Hail, happy Britain! highly favour'd isle,
And Heaven's peculiar care! To thee 'tis given
To train the sprightly steed, more fleet than those
Begot by winds, or the celestial breed
That bore the great Pelides thro' the press,
Of heroes arm'd, and broke their crowded ranks;
Which, proudly neighing, with the sun begins
Cheerful his course, and ere his beams decline
Has measured half thy surface unfatigued.
In thee alone, fair land of liberty!
Is bred the perfect hound, in scent and speed
As yet unrival'd, while in other climes
Their virtue fails, a weak degen'rate race.
In vain malignant steams and winter fogs
Load the dull air, and hover round our coasts;
The huntsman, ever gay, robust and bold,
Defies the noxious vapour, and confides
In this delightful exercise, to raise
His drooping head and cheer his heart with joy.
  Ye vig'rous youths, by smiling fortune blest
With large demesnes, hereditary wealth,
Heap'd copious by your wise fore-fathers' care,

Hear and attend! while I the means reveal
T'enjoy those pleasures, for the weak too strong,
Too costly for the poor; to rein the steed
Swift-stretching o'er the plain; to cheer the pack
Op'ning in concerts of harmonious joy,
But breathing death. What, tho' the gripe severe
Of brazen-fisted Time, and slow disease
Creeping thro' ev'ry vein, and nerve unstrung,
Afflict my shatter'd frame, undaunted still,
Fix'd as a mountain ash, that braves the bolts
Of angry Jove; tho' blasted, yet unfallen;
Still can my soul in fancy's mirror view
Deeds glorious once, recall the joyous scene
In all its splendours deck'd, o'er the full bowl
Recount my triumphs past, urge others on
With hand and voice, and point the winding way;
Pleas'd with that social sweet garrulity,
The poor disbanded veteran's sole delight.
  First let the kennel be the huntsman's care,
Upon some little eminence erect,
And fronting to the ruddy dawn; its courts
On either hand wide op'ning to receive
The sun's all cheering beams, when mild he shines,
And gilds the mountain tops. For much the pack
(Rous'd from their dark alcoves) delight to stretch,

And bask, in his invigorating ray:
Warn'd by the streaming light and merry lark,
Forth rush the jolly clan; with tuneful throats
They carol loud, and in grand chorus join'd
Salute the new-born day. For not alone
The vegetable world, but men and brutes
Own his reviving influence, and joy
At his approach. Fountain of light! if chance
Some envious cloud veil thy refulgent brow,
In vain the Muses aid; untouch'd, unstrung,
Lies my mute harp, and thy desponding bard
Sits darkly musing o'er th' unfinish'd lay.
Let no Corinthian pillars prop the dome,
A vain expense, on charitable deeds
Better dispos'd, to clothe the tatter'd wretch
Who shrinks beneath the blast, to feed the poor
Pinch'd with afflictive want: for use, not state,
Gracefully plain, let each apartment rise.
O'er all let cleanliness preside, no scraps
Bestrew the pavement, and no half-pick'd bones,
To kindle fierce debate, or to disgust
That nicer sense, on which the sportsman's hope
And all his future triumphs must depend.
Soon as the growling pack with eager joy
Have lapp'd their smoking viands, morn or eve,

From the full cistern lead the ductile streams,
To wash thy court well-pav'd; nor spare thy pains,
For much to health will cleanliness avail.
Seek'st thou for hounds to climb the rocky steep,
And brush th' entangled covert, whose nice scent
O'er greasy fallows and frequented roads
Can pick the dubious way? Banish far off
Each noisome stench, let no offensive smell
Invade thy wide enclosure, but admit
The nitrous air and purifying breeze.
Water and shade no less demand thy care:
In a large square th' adjacent field enclose,
There plant in equal ranks the spreading elm,
Or fragrant lime; most happy thy design,
If, at the bottom of thy spacious court,
A large canal, fed by the crystal brook,
From its transparent bosom shall reflect
Thy downward structure and inverted grove.
Here, when the sun's too potent gleams annoy
The crowded kennel, and the drooping pack,
Restless and faint, loll their unmoisten'd tongues,
And drop their feeble tails, to cooler shades
Lead forth the panting tribe; soon shalt thou find
The cordial breeze their fainting hearts revive:
Tumultuous soon they plunge into the stream,

There lave their reeking sides, with greedy joy
Gulp down the flying wave, this way and that
From shore to shore they swim, while clamour loud
And wild uproar torments the troubled flood:
Then on the sunny bank they roll and stretch
Their dripping limbs, or else in wanton rings
Coursing around, pursuing and pursued,
The merry multitude disporting play.
But here with watchful and observant eye
Attend their frolics, which too often end
In bloody broils and death. High o'er thy head
Wave thy resounding whip, and with a voice
Fierce-menacing o'er-rule the stern debate,
And quench their kindling rage; for oft in sport
Begun, combat ensues, growling they snarl,
Then, on their haunches rear'd, rampant they seize
Each other's throats, with teeth and claws, in gore
Besmear'd, they wound, they tear, till on the ground,
Panting, half dead the conquer'd champion lies:
Then sudden all the base, ignoble crowd
Loud clam'ring seize the helpless worried wretch,
And, thirsting for his blood, drag diff'rent ways
His mangled carcass on th' ensanguin'd plain.
O! breasts of pity void! t' oppress the weak,
To point your vengeance at the friendless head,

And with one mutual cry insult the fallen!
Emblem too just of man's degen'rate race.
  Others apart by native instinct led,
Knowing instructor! 'mong the ranker grass
Cull each salubrious plant, with bitter juice
Concoctive stor'd, and potent to allay
Each vitious ferment. Thus the hand divine
Of Providence, beneficent and kind
To all his creatures, for the brutes prescribes
A ready remedy, and is himself
Their great physician. Now grown stiff with age,
And many a painful chace, the wise old hound,
Regardless of the frolic pack, attends
His master's side, or slumbers at his ease
Beneath the bending shade; there many a ring
Runs o'er in dreams; now on the doubtful soil
Puzzles perplex'd, or doubles intricate
Cautious unfolds; then wing'd with all his speed
Bounds o'er the lawn to seize his panting prey,
And in imperfect whimp'rings speaks his joy.
  A diff'rent hound for ev'ry diff'rent chace
Select with judgment; nor the tim'rous hare
O'er-match'd destroy, but leave that vile offence
To the mean, murd'rous coursing crew, intent
On blood and spoil. O blast their hopes, just Heav'n!

And all their painful drudgeries repay
With disappointment and severe remorse.
But husband thou thy pleasures, and give scope
To all her subtle play: by nature led,
A thousand shifts she tries; t' unravel these
Th' industrious beagle twists his waving tail,
Thro' all her labyrinths pursues, and rings
Her doleful knell. See there with count'nance blithe,
And with a courtly grin, the fawning hound
Salutes thee cow'ring, his wide op'ning nose
Upward he curls, and his large sloe-black eyes
Melt in soft blandishments and humble joy;
His glossy skin, or yellow-pied, or blue,
In lights or shades by Nature's pencil drawn,
Reflects the various tints; his ears and legs,
Fleckt here and there, in gay enamel'd pride,
Rival the speckled pard; his rush grown tail
O'er his broad back bends in an ample arch;
On shoulders clean, upright and firm he stands;
His round cat-foot, straight hams, and wide-spread thighs,
And his low-dropping chest, confess his speed,
His strength, his wind, or on the steepy hill,
Or far extended plain; in ev'ry part
So well proportion'd, that the nicer skill
Of Phidias himself can't blame thy choice.

Of such compose thy pack. But here a mean
Observe, nor the large hound prefer, of size
Gigantic; he in the thick-woven covert
Painfully tugs, or in the thorny brake
Torn and embarrass'd bleeds: but if too small,
The pigmy brood in ev'ry furrow swims;
Moil'd in the clogging clay, panting they lag
Behind inglorious; or else shivering creep
Benumb'd and faint beneath the shelt'ring thorn.
For hounds of middle size, active and strong,
Will better answer all thy various ends,
And crown thy pleasing labours with success.
As some brave captain, curious and exact,
By his fix'd standard forms in equal ranks
His gay battalion, as one man they move
Step after step, their size the same, their arms
Far-gleaming, dart the same united blaze:
Reviewing generals his merit own;
How regular! How just! And all his cares
Are well repaid, if mighty GEORGE approve.
So model thou thy pack, if honour touch
Thy gen'rous soul, and the world's just applause.
But above all take heed, nor mix thy hounds
Of diff'rent kinds; discordant sounds shall grate
Thy ears offended, and a lagging line

Of babbling curs disgrace thy broken pack.
But if th' amphibious otter be thy chace,
Or stately stag, that o'er the woodland reigns;
Or if th' harmonious thunder of the field
Delight thy ravish'd ears; the deep-flew'd hound
Breed up with care, strong, heavy, slow, but sure;
Whose ears down-hanging from his thick round head
Shall sweep the morning dew, whose clanging voice
Awake the mountain echo in her cell,
And shake the forests: the bold talbot kind
Of these the prime, as white as Alpine snows;
And great their use of old. Upon the banks
Of Tweed, slow-winding thro' the vale, the seat
Of war and rapine once, ere Britons knew
The sweets of peace, or Anna's dread commands
To lasting leagues the haughty rivals aw'd,
There dwelt a pilf'ring race; well-trained and skill'd
In all the mysteries of theft, the spoil
Their only substance, feuds and war their sport:
Not more expert in ev'ry fraudful art
Th' arch* felon was of old, who by the tail
Drew back his lowing prize: in vain his wiles,
In vain the shelter of the cov'ring rock,
In vain the sooty cloud, and ruddy flames

* Cacus, Virg. Æn. lib. viii.

That issu'd from his mouth; for soon he paid
His forfeit life: a debt how justly due
To wrong'd Alcides, and avenging Heav'n!
Veil'd in the shades of night, they ford the stream,
Then prowling far and near, whate'er they seize
Becomes their prey; nor flocks nor herds are safe,
Nor stalls protect the steer, nor strong barr'd doors
Secure the favourite horse. Soon as the morn
Reveals his wrongs, with ghastly visage wan
The plunder'd owner stands, and from his lips
A thousand thronging curses burst their way:
He calls his stout allies, and in a line
His faithful hound he leads, then with a voice
That utters loud his rage, attentive cheers:
Soon the sagacious brute, his curling tail
Flourish'd in air, low-bending plies around
His busy nose, the steaming vapour snuffs
Inquisitive, nor leaves one turf untried,
Till, conscious of the recent stains, his heart
Beats quick; his snuffling nose, his active tail,
Attest his joy; then with deep op'ning mouth,
That makes the welkin tremble, he proclaims
Th' audacious felon; foot by foot he marks
His winding way, while all the list'ning crowd
Applaud his reas'nings: o'er the wat'ry ford,

Dry sandy heaths, and stony barren hills,
O'er beaten paths, with men and beasts distain'd,
Unerring he pursues, till, at the cot
Arriv'd, and seizing by his guilty throat
The caitif vile, redeems the captive prey:
So exquisitely delicate his sense!
Should some more curious sportsman here enquire,
Whence this sagacity, this wond'rous pow'r
Of tracing, step by step, or man or brute?
What guide invisible points out their way
O'er the dank marsh, bleak hill, and sandy plain?
The courteous Muse shall the dark cause reveal.
The blood that from the heart incessant rolls
In many a crimson tide, then here and there
In smaller rills disparted, as it flows
Propell'd, the serous particles evade
Thro' the open pores, and with the ambient air
Entangling mix. As fuming vapours rise,
And hang upon the gently purling brook,
There by th' incumbent atmosphere compress'd.
The panting chace grows warmer as he flies,
And thro' the network of the skin perspires;
Leaves a long-streaming trail behind, which by
The cooler air condens'd, remains, unless
By some rude storm dispers'd, or rarified

By the meridian sun's intenser heat.
To ev'ry shrub the warm effluvia cling,
Hang on the grass, impregnate earth and skies.
With nostrils op'ning wide, o'er hill, o'er dale,
The vig'rous hounds pursue, with ev'ry breath
Inhale the grateful steam, quick pleasures sting
Their tingling nerves, while they their thanks repay,
And in triumphant melody confess
The titillating joy. Thus on the air
Depend the hunter's hopes. When ruddy streaks
At eve forebode a blust'ring stormy day,
Or low'ring clouds blacken the mountain's brow,
When nipping frosts, and the keen biting blasts
Of the dry parching East, menace the trees
With tender blossoms teeming, kindly spare
Thy sleeping pack, in their warm beds of straw
Low-sinking at their ease; listless they shrink
Into some dark recess, nor hear thy voice
Tho' oft invok'd; or haply if they call
Rouse up the slumb'ring tribe, with heavy eyes
Glaz'd, lifeless, dull, downward they drop their tails
Inverted; high on their bent backs erect
Their pointed bristles stare, or 'mong the tufts
Of ranker weeds, each stomach-healing plant
Curious they crop, sick, spiritless, forlorn.

End of Book I.

These inauspicious days, on other cares
Employ thy precious hours, th' improving friend
With open arms embrace, and from his lips
Glean science, season'd with good-natur'd wit.
But if th' inclement skies and angry Jove
Forbid the pleasing intercourse, thy books
Invite thy ready hand, each sacred page
Rich with the wise remarks of heroes old:
Converse familiar with th' illustrious dead;
With great examples of old Greece or Rome
Enlarge thy free-born heart, and bless kind heav'n,
That Britain yet enjoys dear liberty,
That balm of life, that sweetest blessing, cheap
Tho' purchas'd with our blood. Well-bred, polite,
Credit thy calling. See! how mean, how low,
The bookless saunt'ring youth, proud of the skut
That dignifies his cap, his flourish'd belt,
And rusty couples jingling by his side.
Be thou of other mould; and know that such
Transporting pleasures were by Heav'n ordain'd
Wisdom's relief, and virtue's great reward.

BOOK the SECOND.

ARGUMENT

Of the Power of Instinct in Brutes—Two remarkable Instances in the Hunting of the Roebuck, and in the Hare going to Seat in the Morning—Of the variety of Seats or Forms of the Hare, according to the Change of the Season, Weather, or Wind—Description of the Hare-hunting in all its Parts, interspersed with Rules to be observed by those who follow that Chace—Transition to the Asiatic Way of Hunting, particularly the magnificent Manner of the great Mogul and other Tartarian Princes, taken from Monsieur Bernier, and the History of Gengiskan the Great—Concludes with a short Reproof of Tyrants and Oppressors of Mankind.

OR will it less delight th' attentive sage
T' observe that instinct, which unerring guides
The brutal race, which mimics reason's lore
And oft transcends. Heav'n-taught, the roe-buck swift
Loiters at ease before the driving pack,
And mocks their vain pursuit; nor far he flies
But checks his ardour, till the steaming scent,
That freshens on the blade, provokes their rage.
Urg'd to their speed, his weak deluded foes

Soon flag fatigued; strain'd to excess each nerve,
Each slacken'd sinew fails; they pant, they foam;
Then o'er the lawn he bounds, o'er the high hills
Stretches secure, and leaves the scatter'd crowd
To puzzle in the distant vale below.
'Tis instinct that directs the jealous hare
To choose her soft abode: with step revers'd
She forms the doubling maze; then, ere the morn
Peeps thro' the clouds, leaps to her close recess.
As wand'ring shepherds on th' Arabian plains
No settled residence observe, but shift
Their moving camp; now, on some cooler hill
With cedars crown'd, court the refreshing breeze;
And then, below where trickling streams distill
From some penurious source, their thirst allay,
And feed their fainting flocks: so the wise hares
Oft quit their seats, lest some more curious eye
Should mark their haunts, and by dark treach'rous wiles
Plot their destruction; or perchance in hopes
Of plenteous forage, near the ranker mead,
Or matted blade, wary, and close they sit.
When spring shines forth, season of love and joy,
In the moist marsh, 'mong beds of rushes hid,
They cool their boiling blood: when summer suns

Bake the cleft earth, to thick wide-waving fields
Of corn full-grown they lead their helpless young:
But when autumnal torrents and fierce rains
Deluge the vale, in the dry crumbling bank
Their forms they delve, and cautiously avoid
The dripping covert: yet when winter's cold
Their limbs benumbs, thither with speed return'd,
In the long grass they skulk, or shrinking creep
Among the wither'd leaves: thus changing still
As fancy prompts them, or as food invites.
But ev'ry season carefully observ'd,
Th' inconstant winds, the fickle element,
The wise experienc'd huntsman soon may find
His subtle, various game, nor waste in vain
His tedious hours, till his impatient hounds,
With disappointment vex'd, each springing lark
Babbling pursue, far scatter'd o'er the fields.
  Now golden autumn from her open lap
Her fragrant bounties show'rs; the fields are shorn;
Inwardly smiling, the proud farmer views
The rising pyramids that grace his yard,
And counts his large increase; his barns are stor'd
And groaning staddles bend beneath their load.
All now is free as air, and the gay pack
In the rough bristly stubbles range unblam'd;

No widow's tears o'erflow, no secret curse
Swells in the farmer's breast, which his pale lips
Trembling conceal, by his fierce landlord aw'd:
But courteous now he levels ev'ry fence,
Joins in the common cry, and holloas loud,
Charm'd with the rattling thunder of the field.
Oh bear me, some kind pow'r invisible!
To that extended lawn, where the gay court
View the swift racers, stretching to the goal;
Games more renown'd, and a far nobler train,
Than proud Elean fields could boast of old.
Oh! were a Theban lyre not wanting here,
And Pindar's voice, to do their merit right!
Or to those spacious plains, where the strain'd eye,
In the wide prospect lost, beholds at last
Sarum's proud spire, that o'er the hills ascends,
And pierces thro' the clouds. Or to thy downs,
Fair Cotswold, where the well-breath'd beagle climbs,
With matchless speed, thy green aspiring brow,
And leaves the lagging multitude behind.
Hail, gentle dawn! Mild blushing goddess, hail!
Rejoic'd I see thy purple mantle spread
O'er half the skies, gems pave thy radiant way,
And orient pearls from ev'ry shrub depend.
Farewell, Cleora, here deep sunk in down

Slumber secure, with happy dreams amus'd,
Till grateful steams shall tempt thee to receive
Thy early meal, or thy officious maids,
The toilet plac'd, shall urge thee to perform
Th' important work. Me other joys invite,
The horn sonorous calls, the pack awak'd
Their matins chant, nor brook my long delay:
My courser hears their voice; see there with ears
And tail erect, neighing he paws the ground;
Fierce rapture kindles in his redd'ning eyes,
And boils in ev'ry vein! As captive boys,
Cow'd by the ruling rod, and haughty frowns
Of pedagogues severe, from their hard tasks
If once dismiss'd, no limits can contain,
The tumult rais'd within their little breasts,
But give a loose to all their frolic play:
So from their kennel rush the joyous pack;
A thousand wanton gaieties express
Their inward ecstasy, their pleasing sport
Once more indulg'd, and liberty restor'd.
The rising sun that o'er th' horizon peeps,
As many colours from their glossy skins
Beaming reflects, as paint the various bow
When April show'rs descend. Delightful scene!
Where all around is gay, men, horses, dogs,

And in each smiling countenance appears
Fresh-blooming health, and universal joy.
Huntsman, lead on! behind, the clust'ring pack
Submiss attend, hear with respect thy whip
Loud-clanging, and thy harsher voice obey:
Spare not the straggling cur that wildly roves,
But let thy brisk assistant on his back
Imprint thy just resentments, let each lash
Bite to the quick, till howling he return
And whining creep amid the trembling crowd.
Here on this verdant spot, where nature kind
With double blessings crowns the farmer's hopes;
Where flow'rs autumnal spring, and the rank mead
Affords the wand'ring hares a rich repast;
Throw off thy ready pack. See, where they spread
And range around, and dash the glitt'ring dew.
If some stanch hound, with his authentic voice,
Avow the recent trail, the jostling tribe
Attend his call, then with one mutual cry
The welcome news confirm, and echoing hills
Repeat the pleasing tale. See how they thread
The brakes, and up yon furrow drive along!
But quick they back recoil, and wisely check
Their eager haste; then o'er the fallow'd ground
How leisurely they work, and many a pause

Th' harmonious concert breaks; till more assur'd
With joy redoubled the low valleys ring.
What artful labyrinths perplex their way!
Ah! there she lies; how close! she pants, she doubts
If now she lives; she trembles as she sits,
With horror seiz'd. The wither'd grass that clings
Around her head, of the same russet hue,
Almost deceiv'd my sight, had not her eyes
With life full-beaming her vain wiles betray'd.
At distance draw thy pack, let all be hush'd,
No clamour loud, no frantic joy be heard,
Lest the wild hound run gadding o'er the plain
Untractable, nor hear thy chiding voice.
Now gently put her off; see how direct
To her known mews she flies! Here, huntsman, bring
(But without hurry) all thy jolly hounds,
And calmly lay them in. How low they stoop,
And seem to plough the ground; then all at once
With greedy nostrils snuff the fuming steam
That glads their flutt'ring hearts. As winds let loose
From the dark caverns of the blust'ring god,
They burst away, and sweep the dewy lawn.
Hope gives them wings, while she's spurr'd on by fear.
The welkin rings, men, dogs, hills, rocks, and woods,
In the full concert join. Now, my brave youths,

Stripp'd for the chace, give all your souls to joy!
See how their coursers, than the mountain roe
More fleet, the verdant carpet skim, thick clouds
Snorting they breathe, their shining hoofs scarce print
The grass unbruis'd; with emulation fir'd,
They strain to lead the field, top the barr'd gate,
O'er the deep ditch exulting bound, and brush
The thorny-twining hedge: the riders bend
O'er their arch'd necks; with steady hands by turns
Indulge their speed, or moderate their rage.
Where are their sorrows, disappointments, wrongs,
Vexations, sickness, cares? All, all are gone,
And with the panting winds lag far behind.
  Huntsman! her gait observe; if in wide rings
She wheel her mazy way, in the same round
Persisting still, she'll foil the beaten track.
But if she fly, and with the fav'ring wind
Urge her bold course, less intricate thy task:
Push on thy pack. Like some poor exil'd wretch,
The frighted chace leaves her late dear abodes,
O'er plains remote she stretches far away,
Ah! never to return! For greedy death
Hov'ring exults, secure to seize his prey.
  Hark! from yon covert, where those tow'ring oaks
Above the humble copse aspiring rise,

What glorious triumphs burst in ev'ry gale
Upon our ravish'd ears! The hunters shout,
The clanging horns swell their sweet-winding notes,
The pack wide-op'ning load the trembling air
With various melody; from tree to tree
The propagated cry redoubling bounds,
And winged zephyrs waft the floating joy
Thro' all the regions near. Afflictive birch
No more the school-boy dreads; his prison broke,
Scamp'ring he flies, nor heeds his master's call;
The weary traveller forgets his road,
And climbs th' adjacent hill; the ploughman leaves
Th' unfinish'd furrow; nor his bleating flocks
Are now the shepherd's joy; men, boys, and girls,
Desert th' unpeopled village; and wild crowds
Spread o'er the plain, by the sweet frenzy seiz'd.
Look, how she pants! and o'er yon op'ning glade
Slips glancing by; while, at the further end,
The puzzling pack unravel, wile by wile,
Maze within maze. The covert's utmost bound
Slyly she skirts; behind them cautious creeps,
And in that very track, so lately stain'd
By all the steaming crowd, seems to pursue
The foe she flies. Let cavillers deny
That brutes have reason; sure 'tis something more,

'Tis Heav'n directs, and stratagems inspires,
Beyond the short extent of human thought.
But hold——I see her from the covert break;
Sad on yon little eminence she sits;
Intent she listens with one ear erect,
Pond'ring, and doubtful what new course to take,
And how t' escape the fierce blood-thirsty crew,
That still urge on, and still in volleys loud
Insult her woes, and mock her sore distress.
As now in louder peals the loaded winds
Bring on the gathering storm, her fears prevail,
And o'er the plain, and o'er the mountain's ridge,
Away she flies; nor ships with wind and tide,
And all their canvas wings, scud half so fast.
Once more, ye jovial train, your courage try,
And each clean courser's speed. We scour along,
In pleasing hurry and confusion tossed;
Oblivion to be wish'd. The patient pack
Hang on the scent unwearied, up they climb,
And ardent we pursue; our lab'ring steeds
We press, we gore; till once the summit gain'd,
Painfully panting, there we breathe awhile;
Then like a foaming torrent, pouring down
Precipitant, we smoke along the vale.
Happy the man, who with unrival'd speed

Can pass his fellows, and with pleasure view
The struggling pack; how in the rapid course
Alternate they preside, and jostling push
To guide the dubious scent; how giddy youth
Oft babbling errs, by wiser age reprov'd;
How, niggard of his strength, the wise old hound
Hangs in the rear, till some important point
Rouse all his diligence, or till the chace
Sinking he finds; then to the head he springs
With thirst of glory fir'd and wins the prize.
Huntsman, take heed; they stop in full career.
Yon crowding flocks, that at a distance gaze,
Have haply foil'd the turf. See! that old hound,
How busily he works, but dares not trust
His doubtful sense; draw yet a wider ring.
Hark! now again the chorus fills: as bells
Sally'd a while at once their peal renew,
And high in air the tuneful thunder rolls.
See, how they toss, with animated rage
Recov'ring all they lost!—That eager haste
Some doubling wile foreshews—Ah! yet once more
They're check'd—hold back with speed—on either hand
They flourish round—ev'n yet persist—'Tis right,
Away they spring; the rustling stubbles bend
Beneath the driving storm. Now the poor chace

Begins to flag, to her last shifts reduc'd.
From brake to brake she flies, and visits all
Her well-known haunts, where once she rang'd secure,
With love and plenty blest. See! there she goes,
She reels along, and by her gait betrays
Her inward weakness. See, how black she looks!
The sweat that clogs th' obstructed pores, scarce leaves
A languid scent. And now in open view
See, see, she flies! each eager hound exerts
His utmost speed, and stretches ev'ry nerve.
How quick she turns! their gaping jaws eludes,
And yet a moment lives; till round enclos'd
By all the greedy pack, with infant screams
She yields her breath, and there reluctant dies.
So when the furious Bacchanals assail'd
Threician Orpheus, poor ill-fated bard!
Loud was the cry, hills, woods, and Hebrus' banks,
Return'd their clam'rous rage; distress'd he flies,
Shifting from place to place, but flies in vain;
For eager they pursue, till panting, faint,
By noisy multitudes o'erpower'd, he sinks,
To the relentless crowd a bleeding prey.
The huntsman now, a deep incision made,
Shakes out with hands impure, and dashes down
Her reeking entrails and yet quiv'ring heart:

These claim the pack, the bloody perquisite
For all their toils. Stretch'd on the ground she lies,
A mangled corpse; in her dim glaring eyes
Cold death exults, and stiff'ns every limb.
Aw'd by the threat'ning whip, the furious hounds
Around her bay; or at their master's foot,
Each happy fav'rite courts his kind applause,
With humble adulation cow'ring low.
All now is joy. With cheeks full-blown they wind
Her solemn dirge, while the loud-op'ning pack
The concert swell, and hills and dales return
The sadly-pleasing sounds. Thus the poor hare,
A puny, dastard animal, but vers'd
In subtle wiles, diverts the youthful train.
But if thy proud, aspiring soul disdains
So mean a prey, delighted with the pomp,
Magnificence and grandeur of the chace,
Hear what the Muse from faithful records sings.
Why on the banks of Gemna, Indian stream,
Line within line, rise the pavilions proud,
Their silken streamers waving in the wind?
Why neighs the warrior horse? From tent to tent,
Why press in crowds the buzzing multitude?
Why shines the polish'd helm, and pointed lance,
This way and that far-beaming o'er the plain?

Nor Visapour nor Golconda rebel
Nor the great Sophi, with his num'rous host
Lays waste the provinces; nor glory fires
To rob, and to destroy, beneath the name
And specious guise of war. A nobler cause
Calls Aurengzebe to arms. No cities sack'd,
No mother's tears, no helpless orphan's cries,
No violated leagues, with sharp remorse
Shall sting the conscious victor; but mankind
Shall hail him good and just. For 'tis on beasts
He draws his vengeful sword; on beasts of prey
Full-fed with human gore. See, see, he comes!
Imperial Delhi, op'ning wide her gates,
Pours out her thronging legions, bright in arms,
And all the pomp of war. Before them sound
Clarions and trumpets, breathing martial airs,
And bold defiance. High upon his throne,
Borne on the back of his proud elephant,
Sits the great chief of Tamur's glorious race:
Sublime he sits, amid the radiant blaze
Of gems and gold. Omrahs about him crowd,
And rein th' Arabian steed, and watch his nod:
And potent Rajahs, who themselves preside
O'er realms of wide extent; but here submiss
Their homage pay, alternate kings and slaves.

Next these, with prying eunuchs girt around,
The fair Sultanas of his court; a troop
Of chosen beauties, but with care conceal'd
From each intrusive eye; one look is death.
Ah, cruel Eastern law! (had kings a pow'r
But equal to their wild tyrannic will)
To rob us of the sun's all-cheering ray
Were less severe. The vulgar close the march,
Slaves and artificers; and Delhi mourns
Her empty and depopulated streets.
Now at the camp arriv'd, with stern review,
Thro' groves of spears, from file to file, he darts
His sharp experienc'd eye; their order marks,
Each in his station rang'd, exact and firm,
Till in the boundless line his sight is lost.
Not greater multitudes in arms appear'd
On these extended plains, when Ammon's son
With mighty Porus in dread battle join'd,
The vassal world the prize. Nor was that host
More numerous of old, which the great* King
Pour'd out on Greece from all th' unpeopled East;
That bridg'd the Hellespont from shore to shore,
And drank the rivers dry. Meanwhile in troops
The busy hunter-train mark out the ground,

* Xerxes.

A wide circumference; full many a league
In compass round; woods, rivers, hills, and plains,
Large provinces; enough to gratify
Ambition's highest aim, could reason bound
Man's erring will. Now sit in close divan
The mighty chiefs of this prodigious host.
He from the throne high-eminent presides,
Gives out his mandates proud, laws of the chace,
From ancient records drawn. With rev'rence low,
And prostrate at his feet, the chiefs receive
His irreversible decrees, from which
To vary, is to die. Then his brave bands
Each to his station leads; encamping round,
Till the wide circle is completely form'd.
Where decent order reigns, what these command
Those execute with speed, and punctual care;
In all the strictest discipline of war:
As if some watchful foe, with bold insult,
Hung low'ring o'er their camp. The high resolve,
That flies on wings thro' all th' encircling line,
Each motion steers, and animates the whole.
So, by the sun's attractive pow'r controll'd,
The planets in their spheres roll round his orb,
On all he shines, and rules the great machine.
Ere yet the morn dispels the fleeting mists,

The signal giv'n by the loud trumpet's voice,
Now high in air th' imperial standard waves,
Emblazon'd rich with gold, and glitt'ring gems;
And like a sheet of fire thro' the dun gloom
Streaming meteorous. The soldiers' shouts,
And all the brazen instruments of war,
With mutual clamour, and united din,
Fill the large concave; while from camp to camp
They catch the varied sounds, floating in air.
Round all the wide circumference, tigers fell
Shrink at the noise, deep in his gloomy den
The lion starts, and morsels yet unchew'd
Drop from his trembling jaws. Now all at once
Onward they march embattled, to the sound
Of martial harmony; fifes, cornets, drums,
That rouse the sleepy soul to arms, and bold
Heroic deeds. In parties here and there
Detach'd o'er hill and dale, the hunters range
Inquisitive; strong dogs that match in fight
The boldest brute, around their masters wait,
A faithful guard. No haunt unsearch'd, they drive
From ev'ry covert, and from ev'ry den,
The lurking savages. Incessant shouts
Re-echo thro' the woods, and kindling fires
Gleam from the mountain tops; the forest seems

One mingling blaze: like flocks of sheep they fly
Before the flaming brand: fierce lions, pards,
Boars, tigers, bears, and wolves; a dreadful crew
Of grim, blood-thirsty foes: growling along,
They stalk indignant; but fierce vengeance still
Hangs pealing on their rear, and pointed spears
Present immediate death. Soon as the night
Wrapt in her sable veil forbids the chace,
They pitch their tents, in even ranks, around
The circling camp. The guards are plac'd, and fires
At proper distances ascending rise,
And paint the horizon with their ruddy light.
So round some island's shore of large extent,
Amid the gloomy horrors of the night,
The billows breaking on the pointed rocks,
Seem all one flame, and the bright circuit wide
Appears a bulwark of surrounding fire.
What dreadful howlings, and what hideous roar,
Disturb those peaceful shades! where erst the bird
That glads the night had cheer'd the list'ning groves
With sweet complainings. Thro' the silent gloom
Oft they the guards assail; as oft repell'd
They fly reluctant, with hot-boiling rage
Stung to the quick, and mad with wild despair.
Thus day by day they still the chace renew

At night encamp; till now in straiter bounds
The circle lessens, and the beasts perceive
The wall that hems them in on ev'ry side.
And now their fury bursts, and knows no mean;
From man they turn, and point their ill-judg'd rage
Against their fellow brutes. With teeth and claws
The civil war begins; grappling they tear,
Lions on tigers prey, and bears on wolves;
Horrible discord! till the crowd behind
Shouting pursue, and part the bloody fray.
At once their wrath subsides; tame as the lamb
The lion hangs his head; the furious pard,
Cow'd and subdu'd, flies from the face of man,
Nor bears one glance of his commanding eye.
So abject is a tyrant in distress.
At last within the narrow plain confin'd,
A listed field, mark'd out for bloody deeds,
An amphitheatre more glorious far,
Than ancient Rome could boast, they crowd in heaps
Dismay'd, and quite appall'd. In meet array
Sheath'd in refulgent arms, a noble band
Advance; great lords of high imperial blood,
Early resolved t' assert their royal race,
And prove by glorious deeds their valour's growth
Mature, ere yet the callow down has spread

Its curling shade. On bold Arabian steeds
With decent pride they sit, that fearless hear
The lion's dreadful roar; and down the rock
Swift-shooting plunge, or o'er the mountain's ridge
Stretching along, the greedy tiger leave
Panting behind. On foot their faithful slaves
With javelins arm'd attend; each watchful eye
Fix'd on his youthful care, for him alone
He fears, and to redeem his life, unmov'd
Would lose his own. The mighty Aurengzebe,
From his high-elevated throne, beholds
His blooming race; revolving in his mind
What once he was, in his gay spring of life,
When vigour strung his nerves. Parental joy
Melts in his eyes, and flushes in his cheeks.
Now the loud trumpet sounds a charge. The shouts
Of eager hosts, thro' all the circling line,
And the wild howlings of the beasts within,
Rend wide the welkin; flights of arrows, wing'd
With death, and javelins launch'd from ev'ry arm,
Gall sore the brutal bands, with many a wound
Gored thro' and thro'. Despair at last prevails,
When fainting nature shrinks, and rouses all
Their drooping courage. Swell'd with furious rage,
Their eyes dart fire; and on the youthful band

They rush implacable. They their broad shields
Quick interpose; on each devoted head
Their flaming falchions, as the bolts of Jove,
Descend unerring. Prostrate on the ground
The grinning monsters lie, and their foul gore
Defiles the verdant plain. Nor idle stand
The trusty slaves; with pointed spears they pierce
Thro' their tough hides, or at their gaping mouths
An easier passage find. The king of brutes
In broken roarings breathes his last; the bear
Grumbles in death; nor can his spotted skin,
Tho' sleek it shine, with varied beauties gay,
Save the proud pard from unrelenting fate.
The battle bleeds, grim Slaughter strides along,
Glutting her greedy jaws, grins o'er her prey:
Men, horses, dogs, fierce beasts of ev'ry kind,
A strange promiscuous carnage, drench'd in blood,
And heaps on heaps amass'd. What yet remain
Alive, with vain assault contend to break
Th' impenetrable line. Others, whom fear
Inspires with self-preserving wiles, beneath
The bodies of the slain for shelter creep.
Aghast they fly, or hide their heads dispers'd.
And now perchance (had Heav'n but pleas'd) the work
Of death had been complete, and Aurengzebe

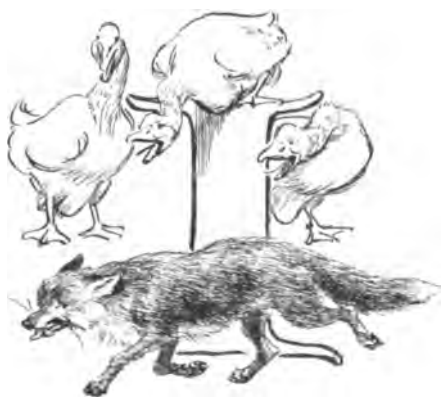
BOOK I
DAYS OF

By one dread frown extinguish'd half their race:
When lo! the bright Sultanas of his court
Appear, and to his ravish'd eyes display
Those charms, but rarely to the day reveal'd.
Lowly they bend, and humbly sue, to save
The vanquish'd host. What mortal can deny
When suppliant beauty begs? At his command,
Op'ning to right and left, the well-train'd troops
Leave a large void for their retreating foes:
Away they fly, on wings of fear upborne,
To seek on distant hills their late abodes.
Ye proud oppressors, whose vain hearts exult
In wantonness of power, 'gainst the brute race,
Fierce robbers like yourselves, a guiltless war
Wage uncontroll'd: here quench your thirst of blood;
But learn from Aurengzebe to spare mankind.

Book the Third.

ARGUMENT

Of King Edgar, and his imposing a Tribute of Wolves' Heads upon the Kings of Wales: From hence a Transition to Fox-Hunting, which is described in all its Parts—Censure of an over-numerous Pack—Of the several Engines to destroy Foxes, and other wild Beasts—The Steel-trap described, and the Manner of using it—Description of the Pitfall for the Lion; and another for the Elephant — The ancient Way of Hunting the Tiger with a Mirror — The Arabian Manner of Hunting the wild Boar—Description of the Royal Stag-chace at Windsor Forest—Concludes with an Address to his Majesty, and an Eulogy upon Mercy.



N Albion's isle when glorious Edgar reign'd,
He, wisely provident, from her white cliffs
Launch'd half her forest, and With num'rous fleets
Cover'd his wide domain; there proudly rode
Lord of the deep, the great prerogative
Of British monarchs. Each invader bold,
Dane and Norwegian, at a distance gaz'd,
And, disappointed, gnash'd his teeth in vain.
He scour'd the seas, and to remotest shores

With swelling sails the trembling corsair fled.
Rich commerce flourish'd, and with busy oars
Dash'd the resounding surge. Nor less at land
His royal cares; wise, potent, gracious prince!
His subjects from their cruel foes he saved,
And from rapacious savages their flocks.
Cambria's proud kings (tho' with reluctance) paid
Their tributary wolves; head after head,
In full account, till the woods yield no more,
And all the rav'nous race extinct is lost.
In fertile pastures more securely graz'd
The social troops; and soon their large increase
With curling fleeces whiten'd all the plains.
But yet, alas! the wily fox remain'd,
A subtle, pilf'ring foe, prowling around
In midnight shades, and wakeful to destroy.
In the full fold, the poor defenceless lamb,
Seiz'd by his guileful arts, with sweet warm blood
Supplies a rich repast. The mournful ewe,
Her dearest treasure lost, thro' the dun night
Wanders perplex'd, and darkling bleats in vain:
While, in th' adjacent bush, poor Philomel
(Herself a parent once, till wanton churls
Despoil'd her nest) joins in her loud laments,
With sweeter notes, and more melodious woe.

For these nocturnal thieves, huntsman, prepare
Thy sharpest vengeance. Oh! how glorious 'tis
To right th' oppress'd, and bring the felon vile
To just disgrace! Ere yet the morning peep,
Or stars retire from the first blush of day,
With thy far-echoing voice alarm thy pack,
And rouse thy bold compeers. Then to the copse,
Thick with entangling grass, or prickly furze,
With silence lead thy many-colour'd hounds,
In all their beauty's pride. See! how they range
Dispers'd, how busily this way and that
They cross, examining with curious nose
Each likely haunt. Hark! on the drag I hear
Their doubtful notes, preluding to a cry
More nobly full, and swell'd with ev'ry mouth.
As straggling armies, at the trumpet's voice,
Press to their standard; hither all repair,
And hurry thro' the woods; with hasty step
Rustling, and full of hope; now driv'n on heaps
They push, they strive; while from his kennel sneaks
The conscious villain. See! he skulks along,
Sleek at the shepherd's cost, and plump with meals
Purloin'd. So thrive the wicked here below.
Tho' high his brush he bear, tho' tipt with white
It gaily shine; yet ere the sun declin'd

Recall the shades of night, the pamper'd rogue
Shall rue his fate revers'd; and at his heels
Behold the just avenger, swift to seize
His forfeit head, and thirsting for his blood.
Heavens! what melodious strains! how beat our hearts
Big with tumultuous joy! the loaded gales
Breathe harmony; and as the tempest drives
From wood to wood, thro' ev'ry dark recess
The forest thunders, and the mountains shake.
The chorus swells; less various, and less sweet
The thrilling notes, when in those very groves
The feather'd choristers salute the spring,
And ev'ry bush in concert joins; or when
The master's hand, in modulated air,
Bids the loud organ breathe, and all the pow'rs
Of music in one instrument combine,
An universal minstrelsy. And now
In vain each earth he tries, the doors are barr'd
Impregnable, nor is the covert safe;
He pants for purer air. Hark! what loud shouts
Re-echo thro' the groves! he breaks away,
Shrill horns proclaim his flight. Each straggling hound
Strains o'er the lawn to reach the distant pack.
'Tis triumph all and joy. Now, my brave youths,
Now give a loose to the clean, gen'rous steed;

Flourish the whip, nor spare the galling spur;
But in the madness of delight forget
Your fears. Far o'er the rocky hills we range,
And dangerous our course; but in the brave
True courage never fails. In vain the stream
In foaming eddies whirls; in vain the ditch
Wide-gaping threatens death. The craggy steep,
Where the poor dizzy shepherd crawls with care,
And clings to ev'ry twig, gives us no pain;
But down we sweep, as stoops the falcon bold
To pounce his prey. Then up th' opponent hill,
By the swift motion slung, we mount aloft.
So ships in winter-seas now sliding sink
Adown the steepy wave; then, toss'd on high,
Ride on the billows, and defy the storm.
What lengths we pass! where will the wand'ring chace
Lead us bewilder'd! Smooth as swallows skim
The new-shorn mead, and far more swift, we fly.
See my brave pack! how to the head they press,
Jostling in close array, then more diffuse
Obliquely wheel, while from their op'ning mouths
The volleyed thunder breaks. So when the cranes
Their annual voyage steer, with wanton wing
Their figure oft they change, and their loud clang
From cloud to cloud rebounds. How far behind

The hunter-crew, wide straggling o'er the plain!
The panting courser now with trembling nerves
Begins to reel; urg'd by the goring spur,
Makes many a faint effort: he snorts, he foams;
The big round drops run trickling down his sides,
With sweat and blood distain'd. Look back and view
The strange confusion of the vale below
Where sour vexation reigns. See yon poor jade!
In vain th' impatient rider frets and swears,
With galling spurs harrows his mangled sides;
He can no more: his stiff, unpliant limbs
Rooted in earth, unmov'd and fix'd he stands,
For ev'ry cruel curse returns a groan,
And sobs, and faints, and dies. Who without grief
Can view that pamper'd steed, his master's joy,
His minion, and his daily care, well clothed,
Well fed with ev'ry nicer cate; no cost,
No labour spar'd; who, when the flying chace
Broke from the copse, without a rival led
The num'rous train: now a sad spectacle
Of pride brought low, and humbled insolence,
Drove like a pannier'd ass, and scourg'd along!
While these with loosen'd reins, and dangling heels,
Hang on their reeling palfreys, that scarce bear
Their weights; another in the treach'rous bog

Lies flound'ring half engulph'd. What biting thoughts
Torment th' abandon'd crew! Old age laments
His vigour spent: the tall, plump, brawny youth
Curses his cumbrous bulk, and envies now
The short pygmean race, he whilom kenn'd
With proud insulting leer. A chosen few
Alone the sport enjoy, nor droop beneath
Their pleasing toils. Here, huntsman, from this height
Observe yon birds of prey; if I can judge,
'Tis there the villain lurks; they hover round
And claim him as their own. Was I not right?
See! there he creeps along; his brush he drags,
And sweeps the mire impure; from his wide jaws
His tongue unmoisten'd hangs; symptoms too sure
Of sudden death. Ha! yet he flies, nor yields
To black despair. But one loose more, and all
His wiles are vain. Hark! thro' yon village now
The rattling clamour rings. The barns, the cots,
And leafless elms return the joyous sounds.
Thro' ev'ry homestall, and thro' ev'ry yard,
His midnight walks, panting, forlorn, he flies;
Thro' ev'ry hole he sneaks, thro' ev'ry jakes
Plunging he wades besmeared, and fondly hopes
In a superior stench to lose his own:
But faithful to the track, th' unerring hounds

With peals of echoing vengeance close pursue.
And now distress'd, no shelt'ring covert near,
Into the hen-roost creeps, whose walls with gore
Distain'd attest his guilt. There, villain, there
Expect thy fate deserv'd. And soon from thence
The pack inquisitive, with clamour loud,
Drag out their trembling prize, and on his blood
With greedy transport feast. In bolder notes
Each sounding horn proclaims the felon dead,
And all th' assembled village shouts for joy.
The farmer, who beholds his mortal foe
Stretch'd at his feet, applauds the glorious deed,
And grateful calls us to a short repast:
In the full glass the liquid amber smiles,
Our native product. And his good old mate
With choicest viands heaps the liberal board,
To crown our triumphs, and reward our toils.
  Here must th' instructive Muse (but with respect)
Censure that num'rous pack, that crowd of state,
With which the vain profusion of the great
Covers the lawn, and shakes the trembling copse.
Pompous incumbrance! A magnificence
Useless, vexatious! For the wily fox,
Safe in th' increasing number of his foes,
Kens well the great advantage; slinks behind

And slyly creeps thro' the same beaten track,
And hunts them step by step; then views escap'd,
With inward ecstasy, the panting throng
In their own footsteps puzzled, foil'd, and lost.
So when proud Eastern kings summon to arms
Their gaudy legions, from far distant climes
They flock in crowds, unpeopling half a world:
But when the day of battle calls them forth
To charge the well-train'd foe, a band compact
Of chosen vet'rans, they press blindly on,
In heaps confus'd, by their own weapons fall,
A smoking carnage scatter'd o'er the plain.
Nor hounds alone this noxious brood destroy:
The plunder'd warrener full many a wile
Devises to entrap his greedy foe,
Fat with nocturnal spoils: at close of day,
With silence drags his trail; then from the ground
Pares thin the close-graz'd turf, there with nice hand
Covers the latent death, with curious springs
Prepar'd to fly at once, whene'er the tread
Of man or beast unwarily shall press
The yielding surface. By th' indented steel
With gripe tenacious held, the felon grins,
And struggles, but in vain: yet oft 'tis known,
When ev'ry art has fail'd, the captive fox

Has shar'd the wounded joint, and with a limb
Compounded for his life. But if perchance
In the deep pitfall plung'd, there's no escape;
But unrepriev'd he dies, and bleach'd in air
The jest of clowns, his reeking carcass hangs.
Of these are various kinds: not ev'n the king
Of brutes evades this deep devouring grave;
But by the wily African betray'd,
Heedless of fate, within its gaping jaws
Expires indignant. When the orient beam
With blushes paints the dawn; and all the race
Carnivorous, with blood full-gorg'd, retire
Into their darksome cells, their satiate snore
O'er dripping offals, and the mangled limbs
Of men and beasts; the painful forester
Climbs the high hills, whose proud aspiring tops,
With the tall cedar crown'd, and taper fir,
Assail the clouds. There 'mong the craggy rocks,
And thickets intricate, trembling he views
His footsteps in the sand; the dismal road
And avenue to death. Hither he calls
His watchful bands; and low into the ground
A pit they sink, full many a fathom deep.
Then in the midst a column high is rear'd,
The butt of some fair tree; upon whose top

A lamb is plac'd, just ravish'd from his dam.
And next a wall they build, with stones and earth
Encircling round, and hiding from all view
The dreadful precipice. Now when the shades
Of night hang low'ring o'er the mountain's brow,
And hunger keen, and pungent thirst of blood,
Rouse up the slothful beast, he shakes his sides,
Slow-rising from his lair, and stretches wide
His rav'nous paws, with recent gore distain'd.
The forests tremble, as he roars aloud,
Impatient to destroy. O'erjoyed he hears
The bleating innocent, that claims in vain
The shepherd's care, and seeks with piteous moan
The foodful teat; himself, alas! design'd
Another's meal. For now the greedy brute
Winds him from far; and leaping o'er the mound
To seize his trembling prey, headlong is plung'd
Into the deep abyss. Prostrate he lies
Astunn'd and impotent. Ah! what avail
Thine eye-balls flashing fire, thy length of tail,
That lashes thy broad sides, thy jaws besmear'd
With blood and offals crude, thy shaggy mane
The terror of the woods, thy stately port,
And bulk enormous, since by stratagem
Thy strength is foil'd? Unequal is the strife,

When sovereign reason combats brutal rage.
On distant Ethiopia's sun-burnt coasts,
The black inhabitants a pitfall frame,
But of a diff'rent kind, and diff'rent use.
With slender poles the wide capacious mouth,
And hurdles slight, they close; o'er these is spread
A floor of verdant turf, with all its flow'rs
Smiling delusive, and from strictest search
Concealing the deep grave that yawns below.
Then boughs of trees they cut, with tempting fruit
Of various kinds surcharg'd; the downy peach,
The clust'ring vine, and of bright golden rind
The fragrant orange. Soon as ev'ning grey
Advances slow, besprinkling all around
With kind refreshing dews the thirsty glebe,
The stately elephant from the close shade
With step majestic strides, eager to taste
The cooler breeze that from the sea-beat shore
Delightful breathes, or in the limpid stream
To lave his panting sides; joyous he scents
The rich repast, unwitting of the death
That lurks within. And soon he sporting breaks
The brittle boughs, and greedily devours
The fruit delicious. Ah! too dearly bought;
The price is life. For now the treach'rous turf

Trembling gives way; and the unwieldy beast,
Self-sinking, drops into the dark profound.
So when dilated vapours, struggling heave
Th' incumbent earth; if chance the cavern'd ground
Shrinking subside, and the thin surface yield,
Down sinks at once the pond'rous dome, engulph'd
With all its tow'rs. Subtle, delusive man!
How various are thy wiles! artful to kill
Thy savage foes, a dull, unthinking race.
Fierce from his lair springs forth the speckled pard,
Thirsting for blood, and eager to destroy;
The huntsman flies, but to his flight alone
Confides not: at convenient distance fix'd,
A polish'd mirror stops in full career
The furious brute: he there his image views;
Spots against spots with rage improving glow;
Another pard his bristly whiskers curls,
Grins as he grins, fierce-menacing, and wide
Distends his op'ning paws; himself against
Himself oppos'd, and with dread vengeance arm'd.
The huntsman now, secure, with fatal aim
Directs the pointed spear, by which transfix'd
He dies, and with him dies the rival shade.
Thus man innum'rous engines forms, t'assail
The savage kind: but most the docile horse,

Swift, and confederate with man, annoys
His brethren of the plains; without whose aid
The hunters arts were vain, unskill'd to wage
With the more active brutes an equal war:
But, borne by him, without the well-train'd pack,
Man dares his foe, on wings of winds secure.
Him the fierce Arab mounts, and with his troop
Of bold compeers ranges the deserts wild:
Where, by the magnet's aid, the traveller
Steers his untrodden course, yet oft on land
Is wreck'd, in the high-rolling waves of sand
Immers'd and lost; while these intrepid bands,
Safe in their horses' speed, out-fly the storm,
And scouring round make men and beasts their prey.
The grisly boar is singled from his herd,
As large as that in Erimanthian woods,
A match for Hercules. Round him they fly
In circles wide; and each in passing sends
His feather'd death into his brawny sides.
But perilous th' attempt. For if the steed
Haply too near approach, or the loose earth
His footing fail, the watchful, angry beast
Th' advantage spies, and at one sidelong glance
Rips up his groin. Wounded, he rears aloft,
And, plunging, from his back the rider hurls

Precipitant; then bleeding spurns the ground,
And drags his reeking entrails o'er the plain.
Meanwhile the surly monster trots along,
But with unequal speed; for still they wound,
Swift-wheeling in the spacious ring. A wood
Of darts upon his back he bears; adown
His tortur'd sides the crimson torrents roll
From many a gaping fount. And now at last
Stagg'ring he falls, in blood and foam expires.

But whither roves my devious Muse, intent
On antique tales, while yet the royal stag
Unsung remains? Tread with respectful awe
Windsor's green glades; where Denham, tuneful bard,
Charm'd once the list'ning Dryads with his song
Sublimely sweet. Oh! grant me, sacred shade,
To glean submiss what thy full sickle leaves.

The morning sun, that gilds with trembling rays
Windsor's high tow'rs, beholds the courtly train
Mount for the chace, nor views in all his course
A scene so gay: heroic, noble youths,
In arts and arms renown'd, and lovely nymphs,
The fairest of this isle, where beauty dwells
Delighted, and deserts her Paphian grove
For our more favour'd shades: in proud parade
These shine magnificent, and press around

The royal happy pair. Great in themselves,
They smile superior; of external show
Regardless, while their inbred virtues give
A lustre to their pow'r, and grace their court
With real splendors, far above the pomp
Of eastern kings in all their tinsel pride.
Like troops of Amazons, the female band
Prance round their cars, not in refulgent arms
As those of old; unskill'd to wield the sword,
Or bend the bow, these kill with surer aim.
The royal offspring, fairest of the fair,
Lead on the splendid train. Anna, more bright
Than summer suns, or as the lightning keen,
With irresistible effulgence arm'd,
Fires ev'ry heart. He must be more than man,
Who unconcern'd can bear the piercing ray.
Amelia, milder than the blushing dawn,
With sweet engaging air, but equal pow'r,
Insensibly subdues, and in soft chains
Her willing captives leads. Illustrious maids,
Ever triumphant! whose victorious charms,
Without the needless aid of high descent,
Had awed mankind, and taught the world's great lords
To bow and sue for grace. But who is he,
Fresh as a rose-bud newly blown, and fair

As op'ning lilies on whom ev'ry eye
With joy and admiration dwells? See! see!
He reins his docile barb with manly grace.
Is it Adonis for the chace array'd?
Or Britain's second hope? Hail, blooming youth!
May all your virtues with your years improve,
Till, in consummate worth, you shine the pride
Of these our days, and to succeeding times
A bright example. As his guard of mutes
On the great Sultan wait, with eyes deject
And fix'd on earth, no voice, no sound is heard
Within the wide serail, but all is hush'd,
And awful silence reigns; thus stand the pack
Mute and unmov'd, and cow'ring low to earth,
While pass the glitt'ring court, and royal pair:
So disciplined those hounds, and so reserv'd,
Whose honour 'tis to glad the hearts of kings.
But soon the winding horn, and huntsman's voice,
Let loose the gen'ral chorus; far around
Joy spreads its wings, and the gay morning smiles.
Unharbour'd now the royal stag forsakes
His wonted lair; he shakes his dappled sides,
And tosses high his beamy head, the copse
Beneath his antlers bends. What doubling shifts
He tries! not more the wily hare; in these

Would still persist, did not the full-mouth'd pack
With dreadful concert thunder in his rear.
The woods reply, the hunter's cheering shouts
Float thro' the glades, and the wide forest rings.
How merrily they chant! their nostrils deep
Inhale the grateful steam. Such is the cry,
And such th' harmonious din; the soldier deems
The battle kindling, and the statesman grave
Forgets his weighty cares; each age, each sex
In the wild transport joins; luxuriant joy,
And pleasure in excess, sparkling exult
On ev'ry brow, and revel unrestrain'd.
How happy art thou, man, when thou'rt no more
Thyself! when all the pangs that grind thy soul,
In rapture and in sweet oblivion lost,
Yield a short interval, and ease from pain!
See the swift courser strains, his shining hoofs
Securely beat the solid ground. Who now
The dang'rous pitfall fears, with tangling heath
High-overgrown? Or who the quiv'ring bog
Soft-yielding to the step? All now is plain,
Plain as the strand sea-laved, that stretches far
Beneath the rocky shore. Glades crossing glades
The forest opens to our wond'ring view:
Such was the king's command. Let tyrants fierce

Lay waste the world; his the more glorious part
To check their pride, and, when the brazen voice
Of war is hush'd, (as erst victorious Rome)
T' employ his station'd legions in the works
Of peace; to smooth the rugged wilderness,
To drain the stagnate fen, to raise the slope
Depending road, and to make gay the face
Of nature with th' embellishments of art.
How melts my beating heart! as I behold
Each lovely nymph, our island's boast and pride,
Push on the gen'rous steed, that strokes along
O'er rough, o'er smooth, nor heeds the steepy hill,
Nor falters in th' extended vale below;
Their garments loosely waving in the wind,
And all the flush of beauty in their cheeks!
While at their sides their pensive lovers wait,
Direct their dubious course; now chill'd with fear
Solicitous, and now with love inflam'd.
O! grant, indulgent Heav'n, no rising storm
May darken with black wings this glorious scene!
Should some malignant power thus damp our joys,
Vain were the gloomy cave, such as of old
Betray'd to lawless love the Tyrian queen.
For Britain's virtuous nymphs are chaste as fair,
Spotless, unblam'd, with equal triumph reign

In the dun gloom, as in the blaze of day.
Now the blown stag, thro' woods, bogs, roads, and streams,
Has measur'd half the forest; but, alas!
He flies in vain, he flies not from his fears.
Tho' far he cast the ling'ring pack behind,
His haggard fancy still with horror views
The fell destroyer; still the fatal cry
Insults his ears, and wounds his trembling heart.
So the poor fury-haunted wretch (his hands
In guiltless blood distain'd) still seems to hear
The dying shrieks; and the pale threat'ning ghost
Moves as he moves, and as he flies, pursues.
See here his slot; up yon green hill he climbs,
Pants on his brow awhile, sadly looks back
On his pursuers, cov'ring all the plain;
But, wrung with anguish, bears not long the sight,
Shoots down the steep, and sweats along the vale:
There mingles with the herd, where once he reign'd
Proud monarch of the groves, whose clashing beam
His rivals awed, and whose exalted power
Was still rewarded with successful love.
But the base herd have learn'd the ways of men,
Averse they fly, or with rebellious aim
Chace him from thence: needless their impious deed,
The huntsman knows him by a thousand marks,

Black, and embossed; nor are his hounds deceived;
Too well distinguish these, and never leave
Their once-devoted foe; familiar grows
His scent, and strong their appetite to kill.
Again he flies, and with redoubled speed
Skims o'er the lawn; still the tenacious crew
Hang on the track, aloud demand their prey,
And push him many a league. If haply then
Too far escap'd, and the gay courtly train
Behind are cast, the huntsman's clanging whip
Stops full their bold career; passive they stand,
Unmov'd, an humble, an obsequious crowd,
As if by stern Medusa gaz'd to stones.
So at their general's voice whole armies halt
In full pursuit, and check their thirst of blood.
Soon at the king's command, like hasty streams
Damm'd up awhile, they foam, and pour along
With fresh recruited might. The stag, who hop'd
His foes were lost, now once more hears astunn'd
The dreadful din; he shivers ev'ry limb,
He starts, he bounds; each bush presents a foe.
Press'd by the fresh relay, no pause allow'd,
Breathless, and faint, he falters in his pace,
And lifts his weary limbs with pain, that scarce
Sustain their load; he pants, he sobs appall'd;

Drops down his heavy head to earth, beneath
His cumbrous beams oppress'd. But if perchance
Some prying eye surprise him; soon he rears
Erect his tow'ring front, bounds o'er the lawn
With ill-dissembled vigour, to amuse
The knowing forester, who inly smiles
At his weak shifts and unavailing frauds.
So midnight tapers waste their last remains,
Shine forth a while, and as they blaze expire.
From wood to wood redoubling thunders roll,
And bellow thro' the vales; the moving storm
Thickens amain, and loud triumphant shouts,
And horns shrill-warbling in each glade, prelude
To his approaching fate. And now in view
With hobbling gait, and high, exerts amaz'd
What strength is left: to the last dregs of life
Reduc'd, his spirits fail, on ev'ry side
Hemm'd in, besieg'd; not the least op'ning left
To gleaming hope, th' unhappy's last reserve.
Where shall he turn? Or whither fly? Despair
Gives courage to the weak. Resolv'd to die,
He fears no more, but rushes on his foes,
And deals his deaths around; beneath his feet
These grovelling lie, those by his antlers gor'd
Defile th' ensanguin'd plain. Ah! see distress'd

He stands at bay against yon knotty trunk,
That covers well his rear; his front presents
An host of foes. O! shun, ye noble train,
The rude encounter, and believe your lives
Your country's due alone. As now aloof
They wing around, he finds his soul uprais'd
To dare some great exploit: he charges home
Upon the broken pack, that on each side
Fly diverse; then as o'er the turf he strains,
He vents the cooling stream, and up the breeze
Urges his course with eager violence:
Then takes the soil, and plunges in the flood
Precipitant; down the mid-stream he wafts
Along, till, (like a ship distress'd, that runs
Into some winding creek,) close to the verge
Of a small island, for his weary feet
Sure anchorage he finds, there skulks immers'd.
His nose alone above the wave, draws in
The vital air; all else beneath the flood
Conceal'd, and lost, deceives each prying eye
Of man or brute. In vain the crowding pack
Draw on the margin of the stream, or cut
The liquid wave with oary feet, that move
In equal time. The gliding waters leave
No trace behind, and his contracted pores

But sparingly perspire: the huntsman strains
His lab'ring lungs, and puffs his cheeks in vain:
At length a blood-hound bold, studious to kill,
And exquisite of sense, winds him from far;
Headlong he leaps into the flood, his mouth
Loud op'ning spends amain, and his wide throat
Swells ev'ry note with joy; then fearless dives
Beneath the wave, hangs on his haunch, and wounds
Th' unhappy brute, that flounders in the stream,
Sorely distress'd, and struggling strives to mount
The steepy shore. Haply once more escap'd,
Again he stands at bay, amid the groves
Of willows, bending low their downy heads.
Outrageous transport fires the greedy pack;
These swim the deep, and those crawl up with pain
The slipp'ry bank, while others on firm land
Engage; the stag repels each bold assault,
Maintains his post, and wounds for wounds returns.
As when some wily corsair boards a ship
Full-freighted, or from Afric's golden coasts,
Or India's wealthy strand, his bloody crew
Upon her deck he slings; these in the deep
Drop short, and swim to reach her steepy sides,
And clinging climb aloft, while those on board
Urge on the work of fate; the master bold,

Press'd to his last retreat, bravely resolves
To sink his wealth beneath the whelming wave,
His wealth, his foes, nor unreveng'd to die.
So fares it with the stag; so he resolves
To plunge at once into the flood below,
Himself, his foes, in one deep gulf immers'd
Ere yet he executes this dire intent,
In wild disorder once more views the light;
Beneath a weight of woe, he groans distress'd:
The tears run trickling down his hairy cheeks;
He weeps, nor weeps in vain. The king beholds
His wretched plight, and tenderness innate
Moves his great soul. Soon at his high command
Rebuk'd, the disappointed, hungry pack
Retire submiss, and grumbling quit their prey.
Great prince! from thee what may thy subjects hope;
So kind, and so beneficent to brutes?
O mercy, heav'nly born! sweet attribute!
Thou great, thou best prerogative of pow'r!
Justice may guard the throne, but, join'd with thee,
On rocks of adamant it stands secure,
And braves the storm beneath: soon as thy smiles
Gild the rough deep, the foaming waves subside,
And all the noisy tumult sinks in peace.

END
of
BOOK
III.

BOOK the FOURTH

ARGUMENT

Of the Necessity of destroying some Beasts, and preserving others for the Use of Man—Of breeding of Hounds; the Season for this Business—The Choice of the Dog, of great Moment—Of the Litter of Whelps—Of the Number to be reared—Of setting them out to their several Walks—Care to be taken to prevent their Hunting too soon—Of entering the Whelps—Of breaking them from running at Sheep—Of the Diseases of Hounds—Of their Age—Of Madness; two Sorts of it described, the Dumb, and outrageous Madness: its dreadful Effects—Burning of the Wound recommended as preventing all ill Consequences—The infectious Hounds to be separated, and fed apart—The Vanity of trusting to the many infallible Cures for this Malady—The dismal Effects of the Biting of a Mad Dog upon Man described—Description of the Otter Hunting—The Conclusion.

HATE'ER of earth is form'd, to earth returns
Dissolv'd: the various objects we behold,
Plants, animals, this whole material mass,
Are ever changing, ever new. The soul
Of man alone, that particle divine,
Escapes the wreck of worlds, when all things fail.
Hence great the distance 'twixt the beasts that perish
And God's bright image, man's immortal race.
The brute creation are his property,

Subservient to his will, and for him made.
As hurtful these he kills, as useful those
Preserves; their sole and arbitrary king.
Should he not kill, as erst the Samian sage
Taught unadvis'd, and Indian Brahmins now
As vainly preach; the teeming rav'nous brutes
Might fill the scanty space of this terrene,
Encumb'ring all the globe: should not his care
Improve his growing stock, their kinds might fail,
Man might once more on roots and acorns feed,
And thro' the deserts range, shiv'ring, forlorn,
Quite destitute of every solace dear,
And ev'ry smiling gaiety of life.

The prudent huntsman, therefore, will supply
With annual large recruits his broken pack,
And propagate their kind: as from the root
Fresh scions still spring forth, and daily yield
New blooming honours to the parent-tree.
Far shall his pack be fam'd, far sought his breed,
And princes at their tables feast those hounds
His hand presents, an acceptable boon.

Ere yet the sun thro' the bright ram has urg'd
His steepy course, or mother Earth unbound
Her frozen bosom to the western gale;
When feather'd troops, their social leagues dissolv'd,

Select their mates, and on the leafless elm
The noisy rook builds high her wicker nest;
Mark well the wanton females of thy pack,
That curl their taper tails, and frisking court
Their piebald mates enamour'd; their red eyes
Flash fires impure; nor rest nor food they take,
Goaded by furious love. In sep'rate cells
Confine them now, lest bloody civil wars
Annoy thy peaceful state. If left at large,
The growling rivals in dread battle join,
And rude encounter. On Scamander's streams
Heroes of old with far less fury fought
For the bright Spartan dame, their valour's prize.
Mangled and torn thy fav'rite hounds shall lie,
Stretch'd on the ground; thy kennel shall appear
A field of blood: like some unhappy town
In civil broils confus'd, while discord shakes
Her bloody scourge aloft, fierce parties rage,
Staining their impious hands in mutual death.
And still the best belov'd and bravest fall:
Such are the dire effects of lawless love.
Huntsman! these ills by timely prudent care
Prevent: for ev'ry longing dame select
Some happy paramour; to him alone
In leagues connubial join. Consider well

His lineage; what his fathers did of old,
Chiefs of the pack, and first to climb the rock,
Or plunge into the deep, or thread the brake
With thorns sharp-pointed, plash'd, and briars inwoven.
Observe with care his shape, sort, colour, size.
Nor will sagacious huntsmen less regard
His inward habits; the vain babbler shun,
Ever loquacious, ever in the wrong.
His foolish offspring shall offend thy ears
With false alarms, and loud impertinence.
Nor less the shifting cur avoid, that breaks
Illusive from the pack; to the next hedge
Devious he strays, there ev'ry mews he tries;
If haply then he cross the streaming scent,
Away he flies vainglorious, and exults
As of the pack supreme, and in his speed
And strength unrivall'd. Lo! cast far behind
His vex'd associates pant, and lab'ring strain
To climb the steep ascent. Soon as they reach
Th' insulting boaster, his false courage fails,
Behind he lags, doom'd to the fatal noose,
His master's hate, and scorn of all the field.
What can from such be hop'd, but a base brood
Of coward curs, a frantic, vagrant race?

When now the third revolving moon appears,

With sharpen'd horns, above th' horizon's brink,
Without Lucina's aid, expect thy hopes
Are amply crown'd; short pangs produce to light
The smoking litter, crawling, helpless, blind,
Nature their guide, they seek the pouting teat,
That plenteous streams. Soon as the tender dam
Has form'd them with her tongue, with pleasure view
The marks of their renown'd progenitors,
Sure pledge of triumphs yet to come. All these
Select with joy; but to the merc'less flood
Expose the dwindling refuse, nor o'erload
Th' indulgent mother. If thy heart relent,
Unwilling to destroy, a nurse provide,
And to the foster-parent give the care
Of thy superfluous brood; she'll cherish kind
The alien offspring; pleas'd thou shalt behold
Her tenderness and hospitable love.
If frolic now and playful they desert
Their gloomy cell, and on the verdant turf,
With nerves improv'd, pursue the mimic chace
Coursing around; unto thy choicest friends
Commit thy valu'd prize: the rustic dames
Shall at thy kennel wait, and in their laps
Receive thy growing hopes, with many a kiss
Caress, and dignify their little charge

With some great title, and resounding name
Of high import. But cautious here observe
To check their youthful ardour, nor permit
The unexperienc'd younker, immature,
Alone to range the woods, or haunt the brakes
Where dodging conies sport: his nerves unstrung,
And strength unequal, the laborious chace
Shall stint his growth, and his rash, forward youth
Contract such vicious habits, as thy care
And late correction never shall reclaim.
When to full strength arriv'd, mature and bold,
Conduct them to the field; not all at once,
But, as thy cooler prudence shall direct,
Select a few, and form them by degrees
To stricter discipline. With these consort
The stanch and steady sages of thy pack,
By long experience vers'd in all the wiles
And subtle doublings of the various chace.
Easy the lesson of the youthful train,
When instinct prompts, and when example guides.
If the too forward younker at the head
Press boldly on, in wanton sportive mood,
Correct his haste, and let him feel abash'd
The ruling whip. But if he stoop behind
In wary modest guise, to his own nose

Confiding sure, give him full scope to work
His winding way, and with thy voice applaud
His patience, and his care: soon shalt thou view
The hopeful pupil leader of his tribe,
And all the list'ning pack attend his call.
Oft lead them forth where wanton lambkins play,
And bleating dams with jealous eyes observe
Their tender care. If at the crowding flock
He bay presumptuous, or with eager haste
Pursue them scatter'd o'er the verdant plain;
In the foul fact attach'd, to the strong ram
Tie fast the rash offender. See! at first
His horn'd companion, fearful, and amaz'd,
Shall drag him trembling o'er the rugged ground:
Then, with his load fatigued, shall turn a-head,
And with his curl'd hard front incessant peal
The panting wretch, 'till, breathless and astunn'd,
Stretch'd on the turf he lie. Then spare not thou
The twining whip, but ply his bleeding sides
Lash after lash, and with thy threat'ning voice,
Harsh-echoing from the hills, inculcate loud
His vile offence. Sooner shall trembling doves,
Escap'd the hawk's sharp talons, in mid air,
Assail their dang'rous foe, than he once more
Disturb the peaceful flocks. In tender age

Thus youth is train'd; as curious artists bend
The taper, pliant twig; or potters form
Their soft and ductile clay to various shapes.
  Nor is't enough to breed; but to preserve
Must be the huntsman's care. The stanch old hounds,
Guides of thy pack, tho' but in number few,
Are yet of great account; shall oft untie
The Gordian knot, when reason at a stand
Puzzling is lost, and all thy art is vain.
O'er clogging fallows, o'er dry plaster'd roads,
O'er floated meads, o'er plains with flocks distain'd
Rank scenting, these must lead the dubious way.
As party-chiefs in senates who preside,
With pleaded reason and with well-turn'd speech
Conduct the staring multitude; so these
Direct the pack, who with joint cry approve,
And loudly boast discov'ries not their own.
Unnumber'd accidents, and various ills,
Attend thy pack, hang hov'ring o'er their heads,
And point the way that leads to death's dark cave
Short is their span; few at the date arrive
Of ancient Argus, in old Homer's song
So highly honour'd: kind, sagacious brute!
Not ev'n Minerva's wisdom could conceal
Thy much-lov'd master from thy nicer sense.

Dying his lord he own'd, view'd him all o'er
With eager eyes, then clos'd those eyes, well pleas'd,
Of lesser ills the Muse declines to sing,
Nor stoops so low; of these each groom can tell
The proper remedy. But O! what care!
What prudence can prevent madness, the worst
Of maladies? Terrific pest! that blasts
The huntsman's hopes, and desolation spreads
Thro' all th' unpeopled kennel unrestrain'd.
More fatal than th' envenom'd viper's bite;
Or that Apulian spider's pois'nous sting,
Heal'd by the pleasing antidote of sounds.
When Sirius reigns, and the sun's parching beams
Bake the dry gaping surface, visit thou
Each ev'n and morn, with quick observant eye,
Thy panting pack. If, in dark sullen mood
The glouting hound refuse his wonted meal,
Retiring to some close, obscure retreat,
Gloomy, disconsolate; with speed remove
The poor infectious wretch, and in strong chains
Bind him suspected. Thus that dire disease,
Which art can't cure, wise caution may prevent.
But this neglected, soon expect a change,
A dismal change, confusion, frenzy, death.
Or in some dark recess, the senseless brute

Sits sadly pining: deep melancholy,
And black despair, upon his clouded brow
Hang low'ring; from his half-op'ning jaws
The clammy venom, and infectious froth,
Distilling fall; and from his lungs inflam'd
Malignant vapours taint the ambient air,
Breathing perdition: his dim eyes are glaz'd,
He droops his pensive head, his trembling limbs
No more support his weight; abject he lies,
Dumb, spiritless, benumb'd, till death at last
Gracious attends, and kindly brings relief.
Or if outrageous grown, behold, alas!
A yet more dreadful scene; his glaring eyes
Redden with fury, like some angry boar
Churning he foams, and on his back erect
His pointed bristles rise; his tail incurv'd
He drops, and with harsh broken howlings rends
The poison-tainted air, with rough hoarse voice
Incessant bays, and snuffs th' infectious breeze;
This way and that he stares aghast, and starts
At his own shade; jealous, as if he deem'd
The world his foes. If haply tow'rd the stream
He cast his roving eye, cold horror chills
His soul; averse he flies, trembling, appall'd
Now frantic to the kennel's utmost verge

Raving he runs, and deals destruction round.
The pack fly diverse; for whate'er he meets
Vengeful he bites, and ev'ry bite is death.
If now perchance thro' the weak fence escap'd,
Far up the wind he roves, with open mouth
Inhales the cooling breeze, nor man nor beast
He spares implacable. The hunter-horse,
Once kind associate of his sylvan toils,
(Who haply now without the kennel's mound
Crops the rank mead, and list'ning hears with joy
The cheering cry that morn and eve salutes
His raptur'd sense,) a wretched victim falls.
Unhappy quadruped! no more, alas!
Shall thy fond master with his voice applaud
Thy gentleness, thy speed; or with his hand
Stroke thy soft dappled sides, as he each day
Visits thy stall, well pleas'd; no more shalt thou
With sprightly neighings, to the winding horn,
And the loud-op'ning pack in concert join'd,
Glad his proud heart. For oh! the secret wound
Rankling inflames, he bites the ground and dies.
Hence to the village with pernicious haste
Baleful he bends his course: the village flies
Alarm'd; the tender mother in her arms
Hugs close the trembling babe; the doors are barr'd,

And flying curs, by native instinct taught,
Shun the contagious bane; the rustic bands
Hurry to arms, the rude militia seize
Whate'er at hand they find; clubs, forks, or guns,
From ev'ry quarter charge the furious foe,
In wild disorder, and uncouth array,
Till now with wounds on wounds oppress'd and gor'd,
At one short pois'nous gasp he breathes his last.
Hence to the kennel, Muse, return, and view
With heavy heart that hospital of woe;
Where horror stalks at large, insatiate death
Sits growling o'er his prey: each hour presents
A diff'rent scene of ruin and distress.
How busy art thou, Fate! and how severe
Thy pointed wrath! The dying and the dead
Promiscuous lie; o'er these the living fight
In one eternal broil; not conscious why,
Nor yet with whom. So drunkards, in their cups,
Spare not their friends, while senseless squabble reigns.
Huntsman! it much behoves thee to avoid
The perilous debate. Ah! rouse up all
Thy vigilance, and tread the treach'rous ground
With careful step. Thy fires unquench'd preserve,
As erst the vestal flame; the pointed steel
In the hot embers hide; and if surpris'd

Thou feel'st the deadly bite, quick urge it home
Into the recent sore, and cauterize
The wound; spare not thy flesh, nor dread th' event:
Vulcan shall save, when Æsculapius fails.
  Here should the knowing Muse recount the means
To stop this growing plague. And here, alas!
Each hand presents a sov'reign cure, and boasts
Infallibility, but boasts in vain.
On this depend: each to his sep'rate seat
Confine, in fetters bound; give each his mess
Apart, his range in open air; and then
If deadly symptoms to thy grief appear,
Devote the wretch, and let him greatly fall,
A gen'rous victim for the public weal.
  Sing, philosophic Muse, the dire effects
Of this contagious bite on hapless man.
The rustic swains, by long tradition taught
Of leeches old, as soon as they perceive
The bite impress'd, to the sea-coasts repair.
Plung'd in the briny flood, th' unhappy youth
Now journeys home secure; but soon shall wish
The seas as yet had cover'd him beneath
The foaming surge, full many a fathom deep.
A fate more dismal, and superior ills,
Hang o'er his head devoted. When the moon

Closing her monthly round, returns again
To glad the night; or when full-orb'd she shines
High in the vault of heav'n; the lurking pest
Begins the dire assault. The pois'nous foam,
Thro' the deep wound instill'd with hostile rage,
And all its fiery particles saline,
Invaded th' arterial fluid, whose red waves
Tempestuous heave, and, their cohesion broke
Fermenting boil; intestine war ensues,
And order to confusion turns embroil'd.
Now the distended vessels scarce contain
The wild uproar, but press each weaker part
Unable to resist, the tender brain
And stomach suffer most; convulsions shake
His trembling nerves, and wandering pungent pains
Pinch sore the sleepless wretch; his flutt'ring pulse
Oft intermits; pensive and sad he mourns
His cruel fate, and to his weeping friends
Laments in vain; to hasty anger prone,
Resents each slight offence, walks with quick step,
And wildly stares; at last with boundless sway
The tyrant frenzy reigns. For as the dog,
(Whose fatal bite convey'd th' infectious bane,)
Raving he foams, and howls, and barks, and bites.
Like agitations in his boiling blood

Present like species to his troubled mind;
His nature and his actions all canine.
So (as old Homer sung) th' associates wild
Of wand'ring Ithacus, by Circe's charms
To swine transform'd, ran grunting thro' the groves.
Dreadful example to a wicked world!
See there distress'd he lies! parch'd up with thirst,
But dares not drink; till now at last his soul
Trembling escapes, her noisome dungeon leaves,
And to some purer region wings away.
  One labour yet remains, celestial maid!
Another element demands thy song.
No more o'er craggy steeps, thro' coverts thick
With pointed thorn, and briars intricate,
Urge on with horn and voice the painful pack;
But skim with wanton wing th' irriguous vale,
Where winding streams amid the flow'ry meads
Perpetual glide along, and undermine
The cavern'd banks, by the tenacious roots
Of hoary willows arch'd; gloomy retreat
Of the bright scaly kind, where they at will
On the green wat'ry reed their pasture graze,
Suck the moist soil, or slumber at their ease,
Rock'd by the restless brook, that draws aslope
Its humid train, and laves their dark abodes.

Where rages not oppression? Where, alas!
Is innocence secure? Rapine and spoil
Haunt ev'n the lowest deeps; seas have their sharks;
Rivers and ponds enclos'd, the rav'nous pike;
He in his turn becomes a prey, on him
Th' amphibious otter feasts. Just is his fate
Deserv'd: but tyrants know no bounds; nor spears
That bristle on his back, defend the perch
From his wide greedy jaws; nor burnish'd mail
The yellow carp; nor all his arts can save
Th' insinuating eel, that hides his head
Beneath the slimy mud; nor yet escapes
The crimson-spotted trout, the river's pride,
And beauty of the stream. Without remorse,
This midnight pillager ranging around,
Insatiate swallows all. The owner mourns
Th' unpeopled rivulet, and gladly hears
The huntsman's early call, and sees with joy
The jovial crew, that march upon its banks
In gay parade, with bearded lances arm'd.
  This subtle spoiler of the beaver kind,
Far off perhaps, where ancient alders shade
The deep still pool, within some hollow trunk
Contrives his wicker couch; whence he surveys
His long purlieu, lord of the stream, and all

The finny shoals his own. But you, brave youths,
Dispute the felon's claim; try ev'ry root,
And ev'ry reedy bank; encourage all
The busy-spreading pack, that fearless plunge
Into the flood, and cross the rapid stream.
Bid rocks, and caves, and each resounding shore,
Proclaim your bold defiance; loudly raise
Each cheering voice, till distant hills repeat
The triumphs of the vale. On the soft sand
See there his seal impress'd! and on that bank
Behold the glitt'ring spoils, half-eaten fish,
Scales, fins, and bones, the leavings of his feast.
Ah! on that yielding sag-bed, see, once more
His seal I view. O'er yon dank rushy marsh
The sly goose-footed prowler bends his course,
And seeks the distant shallows. Huntsman, bring
Thy eager pack, and trail him to his couch.
Hark! the loud peal begins, the clam'rous joy,
The gallant chiding, loads the trembling air.
Ye Naiads fair, who o'er these floods preside,
Raise up your dripping heads above the wave,
And hear our melody. Th' harmonious notes
Float with the stream; and ev'ry winding creek
And hollow rock, that o'er the dimpling flood
Nods pendant, still improve from shore to shore

Our sweet reiterated joys. What shouts!
What clamour loud! What gay, heart-cheering sounds
Urge thro' the breathing brass their mazy way!
Not choirs of Tritons glad with sprightlier strains
The dancing billows, when proud Neptune rides
In triumph o'er the deep. How greedily
They snuff the fishy steam, that to each blade
Rank-scenting clings! See! how the morning dews
They sweep, that from their feet besprinkling drop
Dispers'd, and leave a track oblique behind.
Now on firm land they range; then in the flood
They plunge tumultuous; or thro' reedy pools
Rustling they work their way: no holt escapes
Their curious search. With quick sensation now
The fuming vapour stings; flutter their hearts,
And joy redoubled bursts from ev'ry mouth,
In louder symphonies. Yon hollow trunk,
That, with its hoary head incurv'd, salutes
The passing wave, must be the tyrant's fort,
And dread abode. How these impatient climb,
While others at the root incessant bay:
They put him down. See, there he dives along!
Th' ascending bubbles mark his gloomy way.
Quick fix the nets, and cut off his retreat

Into the shelt'ring deeps. Ah, there he vents!
The pack plunge headlong, and protended spears
Menace destruction; while the troubled surge
Indignant foams, and all the scaly kind
Affrighted hide their heads. Wild tumult reigns,
And loud uproar, Ah, there once more he vents!
See, that bold hound has seiz'd him; down they sink,
Together lost: but soon shall he repent
His rash assault. See, there escap'd he flies,
Half drown'd, and clambers up the slipp'ry bank
With ooze and blood distain'd. Of all the brutes,
Whether by nature form'd or by long use,
This artful diver best can bear the want
Of vital air. Unequal is the fight
Beneath the whelming element. Yet there
He lives not long; but respiration needs
At proper intervals. Again he vents;
Again the crowd attack. That spear has pierc'd
His neck; the crimson waves confess the wound.
Fix'd is the bearded lance, unwelcome guest
Where'er he flies; with him it sinks beneath,
With him it mounts; sure guide to ev'ry foe.
Inly he groans, nor can his tender wound
Bear the cold stream. Lo! to yon sedgy bank

He creeps disconsolate; his num'rous foes
Surround him, hounds, and men. Pierc'd thro' and thro',
On pointed spears they lift him high in air;
Wriggling he hangs, and grins, and bites in vain:
Bid the loud horns, in gaily-warbling strains,
Proclaim the felon's fate; he dies, he dies.
  Rejoice, ye scaly tribes, and leaping dance
Above the wave, in sign of liberty
Restor'd; the cruel tyrant is no more.
Rejoice secure and bless'd; did not as yet
Remain some of your own rapacious kind;
And man, fierce man, with all his various wiles.
  O happy! if ye knew your happy state,
Ye rangers of the fields; whom nature boon
Cheers with her smiles, and ev'ry element
Conspires to bless. What, if no heroes frown
From marble pedestals, nor Raphael's works,
Nor Titian's lively tints, adorn our walls?
Yet these the meanest of us may behold,
And, at another's cost, may feast at will
Our wond'ring eyes; what can the owner more?
But vain, alas! is wealth, not grac'd with pow'r.
The flow'ry landskip, and the gilded dome,
And vistas op'ning to the wearied eye.

Thro' all his wide domain; the planted grove,
The shrubby wilderness, with its gay choir
Of warbling birds, can't lull to soft repose
Th' ambitious wretch, whose discontented soul
Is harrow'd day and night; he mourns, he pines,
Until his prince's favour makes him great.
See there he comes, th' exalted idol comes!
The circle's form'd, and all his fawning slaves
Devoutly bow to earth; from ev'ry mouth
The nauseous flatt'ry flows, which he returns
With promises, that die as soon as born.
Vile intercourse! where virtue has no place.
Frown but the Monarch, all his glories fade;
He mingles with the throng, outcast, undone,
The pageant of a day; without one friend
To soothe his tortur'd mind; all, all are fled:
For tho' they bask'd in his meridian ray,
The insects vanish as his beams decline.
Not such our friends; for here no dark design,
No wicked int'rest bribes the venal heart;
But inclination to our bosoms leads,
And weds them there for life; our social cups
Smile, as we smile; open, and unreserv'd,
We speak our inmost souls; good humour, mirth,

Soft complaisance, and wit from malice free,
Smooth ev'ry brow, and glow on ev'ry cheek.
O happiness sincere! what wretch would groan
Beneath the galling load of pow'r, or walk
Upon the slipp'ry pavements of the great,
Who thus could reign, unenvied and secure?
Ye guardian pow'rs who make mankind your care,
Give me to know wise nature's hidden depths,
Trace each mysterious cause, with judgment read
Th' expanded volume, and submiss adore
That great creative will, who at a word
Spoke forth the wondrous scene. But if my soul,
To this gross clay confin'd, flutters on earth
With less ambitious wing; unskill'd to range
From orb to orb, where Newton leads the way;
And view with piercing eyes the grand machine,
Worlds above worlds; subservient to his voice,
Who, veil'd in clouded majesty, alone
Gives light to all; bids the great system move,
And changeful seasons in their turns advance,
Unmov'd, unchang'd, himself: yet this at least
Grant me propitious, an inglorious life,
Calm and serene, nor lost in false pursuits
Of wealth or honours; but enough to raise

END of BOOK IV.

My drooping friends, preventing modest want,
That dares not ask. And if, to crown my joys,
Ye grant me health, that, ruddy in my cheeks,
Blooms in my life's decline; fields, woods, and streams,
Each tow'ring hill, each humble vale below,
Shall hear my cheering voice, my hounds shall wake
The lazy morn, and glad th' horizon round.

THE END

Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co.
London & Edinburgh

COME HIM THAT WILL
LET THE WATER OF LIFE FREELY

89053006482

b89053006482a

Steenbock Memorial Library
University of Wisconsin - Madison
550 Babcock Drive
Madison, WI 53706-1293